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ART. I.—THE SACRAMENTAL SYSTEM OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

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To the theory of sacramental grace which is supposed to underlie the "Order of Worship" now provisionally before the German Reformed Church, some have opposed the fathers of the same Church in the sixteenth century, maintaining that their writings are in the interest of a system quite different if not directly contrary. Others, while assuming this, have gone farther, and openly proclaimed in way of challenge that such a theory finds no proper countenance from the fathers of the third, fourth and fifth centuries, and that those who pretend this only manifest the vain prattle of men too ignorant forsooth to grasp the real theological thought of the period.*

Both parties agree in finding in the baptismal formula of the "Order of Worship" the most distinct articulation of the sacramental theory or system against which they thus array both the Reformation and the primitive Church. It is involved, they assert, in the address to parents or sponsors, which is as

* "See Proceedings of the Convention of ministers and laymen held at Myers-town," pp. 19 and 22.

follows: "You present this child here, and do seek for him deliverance from the power of the Devil, the remission of sin, and the gift of a new and spiritual life by the Holy Ghost, through the sacrament of baptism which Christ hath ordained for the communication of such great grace." In opposition to this, it is maintained on the one hand that children of pious parents are not under the power of the Devil, but are so included in the Covenant of promise as to require no deliverance of this kind. They are held to be, through their birth from Christian parents, already in the sphere of grace, and just because of this, they are to be baptized to confirm them in their already existing state of salvation. Again on the other hand and pushing the opposition still farther, it is maintained that *all* children are in some way, by the mystery of the Incarnation and without baptism or any covenant relations, in grace and beyond condemnation, at least so long as they do not by actual sins sell such heavenly inheritance. In other words, so far as the theory is intelligible, original sin is swept away by the Incarnation, and nature has thereby become so identified with grace that the birth of the flesh is no longer flesh, but spirit, until made of the flesh by some actual transgression; and baptism is administered only to guard against this terrible evil. But let us quote the very language of this opposition. "*The infant according to the Catechism,*" it is boldly asserted, "*does not belong to the Devil previous to baptism: it has a precious birth-right in the new creation, and not until by a voluntary act of its own it sells the heavenly inheritance for a mess of pottage, can it enter upon the death-road of actual sins. To guard against this terrible evil, the Catechism teaches that it must also be incorporated into the Christian Church.*"

Now it is claimed, publicly and with the assenting request of a convention of ministers and laymen met together to seek divine aid in opposing heresy, that, as against the sacramental theory of the "Order of Worship," the fathers of the third, fourth, and fifth centuries may be regarded as in general harmony with this crude and visionary counter-theory. Indeed the advocates of the Liturgy are challenged to produce a single line

in which a theory of sacramental grace such as is involved in the baptismal formula referred to, is confirmed by their testimony. Irenæus, Cyprian, and Augustine are specially mentioned as writers who may be searched in vain for anything of the kind. We propose, therefore, in the following article, and perhaps succeeding ones, to meet this bold challenge, and bring out in a brief and general way the sacramental system in which the early Church most clearly stood.

The Apostolic Fathers, technically so called, do not develop what may be called a doctrinal system. Their entire writings, however, give utterance to the profound truth underlying all such development, *viz.*, that in Christ the source of an independent and supernatural order of life and faith has been found, in the bosom of which alone the redemption, salvation, and glorification of mankind is possible. In the communion of this life and faith, these primitive fathers continually bore witness to their consciousness of having reached the absolute religion before which all possible forms of prechristian life which confronted them must yield. They virtually stood apart from the world, feeling that in their sphere of grace they had transcended the whole compass of the world's life as this had come to manifest itself either in the forms of religion or philosophy. In them Christianity was showing itself a vast energy, flowing from the person and merit of Christ, and organizing itself as a new and practical force in history, and challenging on every hand the attention and submission of the children of men. Their mission was not to assert in distinct, scientific form the contents of their faith, but to give in the fresh vigor of practical life a powerful exhibition of that grace which, in apprehending them, had come to be felt and to be held forth as the necessary principle of all right religious activity for the world. Although not engaged in developing any definite theological system, yet they did not dream for a moment that the new order of religious life in which they stood was made theirs in the order of nature. They received it as a mystery of

grace coming from above, and only in their obedience to it did they feel that they had come to pass out of the *saeculum* of this world's life. Only in their full surrender thereto, and their living incorporation therein, through a regeneration supernatural in every sense, did they view themselves as called to eternal life. The Church, into which, from the world without as from the dominion of sin and Satan they had been brought by baptism, they regarded as a mystery, confronting them with the very presence of a new and heavenly order of grace in which the glorified Christ ruled and reigned. This was such a universal acknowledgment,—such a necessary postulate of faith in their age, that it is every where throughout the epistles of Ignatius assumed and made the ground of that whole system of Church unity which he seems so anxious to unfold and enforce. With him it is just the fact that Christ, the living unity of God and man, is perpetually present in the Church, which gives the possibility and renders it necessary that *it* should exhibit His fullness in a corresponding unity,—one faith, one worship, one organization, wherein the mysterious theanthropic oneness of Christ's life continually externalizes itself. "It is not possible," he says, "that the head could have been born separately without members, God having promised a union which is himself" (Epist. ad Trall. c. xi.). Again: "For this reason did the Lord receive ointment upon his head, that he might breathe into the Church incorruption." Epist. ad Ephes. c. xvii). Again: "Be ye subject to the bishop and to each other, as Jesus Christ to the Father according to the flesh, and the Apostles to Christ and to the Father and to the Spirit, that the union may be both of the flesh and of the Spirit (eternal and internal—*σάρκα καὶ πνεύματι*). "Epist. ad Magn. c. xiii). Dorner, (after a most careful analysis of the epistles of Ignatius, says: "As we find it, his (Ignatius,) view of the person of Christ developed itself through this, that he is everywhere governed by the practical thought that the idea of the Church is, to continue Christ's person and work as his continual living image (*fortgehendes lebendiges Abbild*), in such way, however, that he, as the unifying principle of the divine and human, remains continually immanent in her

(als das einigende Princip des Göttlichen und Menschlichen ihr stets immanent bleibt).” (Dorner’s Lehre v. d. Person Christi, vol. 1, p. 160.

It is quite needless to quote Ignatius in detail. Everywhere, page after page, Christ is viewed as the source and creative principle of a supernatural order of life whose embodiment is the Church: and all this in such real way, that, even without any direct mention of the sacraments, no one can well fail to see that these, as divine ordinances in the Church, and administered by those properly commissioned must have been regarded by him as clothed with full objective force, ever exhibiting with true effect the mediating work of the risen Lord. But Ignatius has not left us to such general inference only. He frequently refers to the sacraments, and always in the same tone of thought. “They (the heretics) hold themselves aloof from the Eucharist and prayer, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, and which in goodness the Father hath raised up. (Epist. ad Smyrn. c. vii). “If any one be not within the altar, he is deprived of the bread of God. * * * breaking one bread, which is the medicine of immortality, the antidote that we should not die, but live in Jesus Christ forever” (ad Ephes. v. and xx.).

No mention is made, it is true, of infant baptism: but the whole theory of sacramental grace, in which infant baptism is made to have such force as is implied in the “Order of Worship,” seems to be fully congenial to his thought. Dorner, without any hesitation, says, “The many passages where Ignatius speaks of the Lord’s Supper (and where also he mentions baptism), show that he held this sacrament in such high regard, because in his view it is in part the means and organ of Christ whereby he communicates to the Congregation the Spirit of unity, makes his theanthropic life their life: and in part, and this almost with still more force, because he views the Eucharist as the most blooming representation of the unity and love of the congregation, as the altar upon which they, acting in the bishop and represented as unity, offer the sacrifices of their praise and thanks, and enter into a theanthropic unity with Christ and among

themselves as one body with many members by one Spirit." (Dorner, *Person. Ch.* vol. 1, p. 158).

While we may hold that the peculiar Church organization which Ignatius so firmly insisted upon was not as yet in all its particulars fully established throughout the Christian world, yet this only makes more evident that his view of the sacrament was of universal acceptance; for at every point, as a doctrine fully settled, he uses it to show the necessity of his Episcopal system. How unless in obedience to the bishop, can we be within the altar? At the altar is to be found the bread of God, the medicine of immortality, the centre of communion and unity, where all must come to offer their sacrifices of thanksgiving. This, which on every hand is acknowledged, necessitates, in his line of argument, that the spiritual unity of the Church in Christ which the altar communion upholds, should continually externalize itself in the bishop who by the will of Christ stands at the altar, and in whom as officiating there the whole congregation is held together as one body. Still farther, Ignatius uses his view of the sacrament against the heretics. By him already, though not so frequently nor in such definite form as by subsequent writers, the Lord's supper was held up as a witness to the truth of Christ's person and of the resurrection of the flesh; for carrying with it as universally acknowledged the true effect of Christ's body and blood, it necessarily arrayed the whole Church against all Gnostic or Doketic views of his person. How, when the Church with one accord holds that the passion and consequent glorification of Christ are sacramentally made of real effect in the Lord's Supper, can any one dare to assert that he only suffered in appearance? How again, if our flesh and blood are in the sacrament fed and nourished by a flesh and blood in which are lodged the power of an endless life, can any one dare to assert that there can be no resurrection of the body? Already, we say, in Ignatius this method of argument is manifesting itself: and it is perfectly puerile to imagine that he stands in no general fellowship with that theory of sacramental grace which underlies the "Order of Worship;" and it is only by a

complete subversion of his real position that he can be brought into any sympathy with modern puritanism.

In Justin Martyr there is a somewhat more developed plan of thought: He is not engaged in giving form to or defending the unity of the Church in its organization. In his day this had ceased to be of so much practical force. But Christianity had already made such rapid inroads upon heathenism in the Roman Empire, that the old order of religious life and culture had become aroused, as in self-defence, to the most determined opposition. This opposition was not only that of the state in way of its penalties and persecutions, developing from the side of Christianity the patience and fortitude of a noble army of martyrs: but there was also at the same time an attack from the whole literary and philosophical culture of heathenism, both boldly from without and covertly from within in forms of heresy, which necessitated a corresponding defence upon the part of the Church. To this labor of patience and defence, requiring fortitude of will and in some measure a philosophical spirit, Justin addressed himself, and deservedly earned the double title of martyr and philosopher. From the necessity thus imposed (as well as from an inward impulse) of asserting the divine philosophy of Christianity,—of showing how it involves the highest reason, and indeed reason in its totality (*λογικὸν τὸ ὅλον*), we find in Justin the germs of a profound Christological system beginning to manifest themselves.

Our object is not to attempt to determine the characteristics of such a system in this its incipency, but rather to show how Justin, while maintaining the absolute revelation of the incarnate Logos, held that He, the world's Saviour, applied to men the redeeming power of his own endless life. Justin, like Ignatius, finds the perennial source of all salvation in Christ, but enters upon a more lengthy discussion of the objective means of its appropriation. In a general way, he thus gives expression to his view in reference to both these points. "Christ, being the first-born of the whole creation, has become also the beginning (*ἀρχή*) of a new race regenerated by him through water,

and faith, and the wood which holds the mystery of the cross." (Dial. with Tryph. c. 138).

Most clearly the new race here referred to is not the entire human family, carried beyond and out of the whole scope of original sin by the Incarnation, viewed as some magical potency now universally operative in the law of physical genesis so that by original birth each and all have at the start a heavenly birth-right or inheritance. On the contrary, in most plain terms the new race is one that is made such *by a regeneration through water and faith*. Justin makes a broad distinction between the carnal and spiritual birth. The infant born of earthly parents in some way has his starting point in sin and bondage and is without a spiritual birth. When attempting to explain this, he refers to the transgression of Eve and the sensuality of the flesh, but never loses sight of the reality of a world of demons and the usurped dominion of Satan. "Eve who was a virgin and undefiled, having conceived the word of the serpent, brought forth disobedience and death"—" * * * the beast (serpent) through which transgression and disobedience had their origin" (Dial. with Tryph. c. 100 and 112). Over against this birth in the sphere of death and under the dominion of Satan, Justin ever places the mystery of another and spiritual birth in the order of grace. This spiritual birth, this supernatural regeneration, he holds, has its beginning point in the sacrament of baptism. In his Apology, c. 61, he writes: "We will state how we consecrate ourselves to God being renewed by Christ" * * * after proper preparation upon the part of the candidates, "we lead them to a place where there is water and there they are regenerated in the same manner as we also were; for they are washed in that water in the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost. For Christ said Except ye be born again ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

There is no direct reference here or in any of Justin's writings to infant baptism: but there is such an acknowledgment of the objective force of the sacrament and also of the purpose of its institution, as must set aside every thought that the new

creation in Christ becomes ours by birthright while in the order of nature, which birthright we lose or sell when coming to what may be called actual transgression. Not the least shadow of such a theory crosses the pathway of his thought. On the contrary, a view of sacramental grace, similar in its general features to that underlying the "Order of Worship," seems perfectly familiar to his mind; and it is easy to see how, with such a view, any opposition to infant baptism which might arise could not long maintain itself in the early Church.

In reference to the Lord's Supper, Justin unequivocally states, that in the distribution of the elements we are nourished with the true body and blood of Christ. There has been much discussion in regard to the mode after which he supposes the body and blood of Christ to be present in the Sacrament, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Reformed alike claiming him in their favor. The language of Justin is certainly ambiguous in this respect; but no one has ever thought of denying the truth that he views the Eucharist as exhibiting to us with true effect the body and blood of Christ, however much difference may have arisen in reference to his alleged explanation of the mystery. The passage, whose interpretation has been the subject of so much discussion, is this. "We do not receive these as common (*κοινὸν*) bread nor as common drink, but even as Jesus Christ, our Saviour, who was incarnate by the word of God, had flesh and blood for our salvation, so also have we been taught that the food, which has been offered in thanksgiving (*εὐχαριστηθεῖσαν τροφήν*) by the prayer of the word which is from him, and by which our flesh and blood are nourished by a transmutation (*κατὰ μεταβολήν*), is the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus." (Apology, c. 66). However the *κατὰ μεταβολήν* of this passage may be explained, there can be no question but that the whole course of thought clearly indicates that Justin regards the participants of the Supper as truly receiving therein the heavenly nourishment of the body and blood of Christ.

Justin also refers to a sacrificial element in the Supper, and has been claimed by Mœhler and Döllinger and others as favoring the Roman Catholic dogma of the mass. In his dialogue

with Trypho, chap. 117, he says, "Accordingly, God, anticipating all the sacrifices which we offer through His name, and which Jesus the Christ enjoined us to offer, that is in the Eucharist of the bread and the cup, and which are presented by Christians in all places throughout the world, bears witness that they are well pleasing to Him." Again chap. 41, "And the offering of flour which was commanded to be presented for those who were cleansed of leprosy was a type of the bread of the Eucharist, which Jesus Christ, our Lord, commanded to be observed in remembrance of the passion which He endured for those who are cleansed in their souls, from all wickedness. * * * He (Malachi) then speaks of those Gentiles, namely us, who in every place offer sacrifices to Him, *i. e.* the bread of the Eucharist and also the cup of the Eucharist."

Now while in the passage before cited the bread and wine are regarded as sacramental means through which our human life is divinely nourished with the body and blood of Christ, they are here at the same time viewed as the means through which we bring sacrificially to our remembrance the passion of Christ, and join our offerings with that great offering made once for all.

Semisch, following Hofling, holds that Justin regards the sacrifice as one of thanks. But certainly it is not the ordinary thankfulness which is awakened by bringing to the mind in way of thought only the narrative or scene of the Saviour's death. It is a special thanksgiving, a Eucharistic offering, offered in the compass and under the mystery of a peculiar sacramental remembrance of Christ's death, a remembrance through the breaking of bread and the pouring out of wine, and inseparably connected thus with a peculiar solemn altar communion of Christ's body and blood. Justin could hardly base his argument for the truth of Christianity upon the fact that the bread and wine of the Eucharist fulfilled the prophecy of Malachi, that in every place incense is offered to my name and a pure offering, unless the sacrificial offerings of Christians had for special reasons been regarded as centering themselves in the Eucharist. But why this convergence to that one mystery? Just because *there* was the sacramental memorial of that one great

offering which had been made upon the Cross in union with which alone all the offerings of the faithful become acceptable. Just because the bread when used in the Sacrament was to be no common bread, and the wine no common wine, but to exhibit in mystery the reality of Christ's body and blood as sacrificed for us, were they regarded as offerings placed upon the altar, wherein through the whole transaction, the faithful were showing forth in mystery the Lord's death until He comes. Such at least seems to be the underlying faith of Justin, and while it is by no means such as involves the doctrine of the mass, it is in its general features in harmony with the theory underlying the "Order of Worship." In no conceivable way can Justin's view of the Sacrament be twisted into conformity with the puritanic type of thought.

Semisich, to whom we have referred, and whose testimony is of great weight in a question of this kind, has taken occasion to remark in his able work on the life, writings, and opinions of Justin Martyr, that, "at first the Church was united on the question, by what instrumentality individuals obtained a participation in the redemption accomplished by Christ. Baptism and the Lord's Supper were unanimously considered as the two objective vehicles (?) by which the gifts of Christian grace passed into the hearts and lives of Christians" (see Translation by Ryland, vol. 2, p. 239).

In Irenæus, we have the great Church teacher of the close of the second century, who, familiar with the various tendencies of theological thought in both East and West, endeavors with great vigor of practical life and with a profound depth of scientific investigation to bring these tendencies into some organic unity, and to harmonize them by establishing a broad Christological base in which they may find their proper measure of meaning and truth. With a strange ignorance of his entire order of thought, this great teacher has been specially pointed out as one who cannot be shown to be in harmony with that sacramental theory, which, underlying the "Order of Worship," makes such earnest account of the broad distinction between the spheres of nature and grace as to necessitate a new birth from

above before in any sense our human life can be said to be delivered from the power of the Devil, and pass out of the condemnation of death.

Most assuredly does Irenæus, as is claimed by those who seek his authority for a visionary theory which he never held, "assert that the Logos entered the womb of the Virgin, not arbitrarily, but for a profound reason," and thereby came from thence onward to cover the whole compass of our earthly life from conception through growth and death and Hades, and upward to its height of exaltation at the right hand of the Father. But how does this gloriously accomplished redemption of humanity, as in the person of Christ, reach men and deliver them from the power of the Devil, and from the dominion of death and hell, cancelling the sin of their old conception, and the iniquity of their original birth? Does Irenæus leave us in a moment's doubt as to what answer he gives to this, the very question at issue? Does he hold the crude theory that all are born now naturally into the bosom of grace wrought out by Christ, and that the old Adamic life is now set aside, and that the new, as a natural inheritance, must be guarded from being sold by actual sins, through the sacrament of baptism? The very passage which seems to be in the mind of the writer who claims it as testimony in his own favor, is directly at variance with any such thought. "He comes to save all through himself: all I say, who through Him are regenerated into God, (omnes, inquam, qui renascuntur in Deum), infants, children, &c." (*Adv., hæc.,* 11, 22.) It is by a regeneration therefore that the salvation is made effective for any; and this regeneration is held by him to be effected by baptism. Indeed in the very next book baptism is defined by him as "*regeneratio in Deum.*" Dr. Schaff has well remarked in his *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 1, pp. 402, 403, that "the profound view of Irenæus involves an acknowledgment not only, as is universally granted, of the idea of infant baptism, but also of the practice of it: for in the mind of the ancient Church, baptism and regeneration were intimately connected, and by Irenæus they are distinctly identified."

No less explicit, so far as the general idea of sacramental grace is concerned, is the view which Irenæus takes of the Lord's Supper. His profound thought that Christ in his humanity, having passed through the various stages of human life, perfecting each, and having become glorified, is now and by virtue of all this the fountain of the Holy Ghost,—the living principle of a new creation for all who believe,—this his profound thought must of necessity enter into his doctrine of the Lord's Supper, as indeed it conditions his whole conception of the Church, as carrying in itself the presence and fulness of Christ's glorified life, through the Holy Ghost. In Christ, according to Irenæus, the divine idea of man has reached a full realization, and this in such way that He is through the Holy Ghost the source and substance now of all such realization for the children of men. Christ is the spiritual man,—the concrete exhibition of the divine idea of human life, and thus while at the same time he is the fullest, the perfect revelation of the divine, he is also the Son of man, in whom the highest self-communication of God to the creature is reached, in whom the very fulness of the Spirit dwells to be poured out thence as the quickening power, the sanctifier of the children of men. According to Irenæus, the incarnation of the Logos viewed as the very summit of divine revelation, reaches out of necessity to the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, through which mystery Christ in his own body the Church is uniting with himself by living incorporation those who thus come to share in his life and are enabled to secure their proper perfection in the resurrection of the body and full glorification; for, in his view, the idea of human life could not find its realization in Christ's perfection of it in his own person, except as through this also by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost the human race should be made to partake of its fulness—(See the valuable analysis of Duncker, "*Des hiel Irenæus Christol.*" pp. 260–262). From this how evident it must be that in his view no process of life in which men are to realize the divine aim of their being can be conceived as possible except it have its source in Christ,—except it be in the compass of his spiritual activity. Such process of life *must* have its beginning in *regeneration*;

but this regeneration, as we have seen from the statement of Irenæus, has its starting point in the sacrament of baptism. Now, and this is the point we have in view, it is evident from his whole line of thought, that this new life must be kept in being, continued in its process onward to resurrection and glorification by a nourishment reaching it from the same central source, the glorified human through the Holy Ghost. The sacrament of the body and blood of Christ must, in consistency with the profound thought of Irenæus, be viewed as carrying with it the reality of a heavenly food in the eating whereof resurrection and everlasting life are possible.

But we are not left to infer this simply from his general order of thought. He has himself given explicit utterance to such a view when mentioning the Lord's Supper. "How say they, that the flesh passeth to corruption and partaketh not of life, which is itself nourished from the body of the Lord and his blood? Either let them change their mind, or abstain from offering the things above spoken of. But our meaning is in harmony with the Eucharist, and the Eucharist again confirms our meaning. * * * For as the bread from the earth, receiving the invocation of God, is no longer common bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two things an earthly and a heavenly, so also our bodies receiving the Eucharist are no longer perishable having the hope of the resurrection to life everlasting." (*Adver. hæc.* iv. 18, 5.) Here Irenæus boldly meets a heretical denial of the resurrection of the body by citing a universally acknowledged doctrine of the Church, *viz.*, that in the Eucharist as nourishing food, the body and blood of Christ come to be the very warrant that our body and blood shall reach an imperishable life. So again, and for the same purpose, he writes: "Since we are his members and are nourished through the creature, and he himself gives us the creature, making his sun to rise and raining, as he willeth, he owned the cup which is from the creature, to be his own blood from which he bedeweth our blood, and the bread from the creature he affirmed to be his own body, from which he increaseth our bodies. When then both the mingled cup and the created bread receive the word of God, and

the Eucharist becometh the body and blood of Christ, and from these the substance of our flesh is increased and consisteth, how do they say that the flesh is not capable of receiving the gift of God which is eternal life—the flesh, which is nourished by the body and blood of the Lord, and is his member as the blessed Paul saith, that we are all members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.” (Adver. hæ. v. 2, 2 and 3).

Who can question for a moment but that Irenæus here maintains that the consecrated elements in some way exhibit with true effect the body and blood of Christ, so that in participating the faithful are kept and preserved in body, soul and spirit unto everlasting life? The objective force of the sacrament is most unreservedly held up to view, and in such a way as at once to shock the moral sensibilities of a large portion of puritanism. It is true that in the passages thus far quoted no specific reference has been made to the activity of the Holy Spirit; and Semisch has some ground apparently for his position that “the doctrine of the Holy Ghost was too undeveloped at this time to suppose that Irenæus conceived him to be the mediating principle between the outward elements in the Lord’s Supper and Christ.” But in the fragments edited by Pfaff (which Semisch from his position feels compelled to regard spurious), the activity of the Holy Spirit is most plainly indicated and in full harmony also with the train of thought which characterizes the other writings of Irenæus. “We offer,” one of these fragments runs, “unto God the bread and the cup of blessing, giving thanks unto him, that he has commanded the earth to send forth these fruits for our nourishment, and afterwards, having duly performed the oblation, *we call forth the Holy Spirit that he would make this sacrifice and this bread the body of Christ*, that they who receive these antitypes may obtain forgiveness of sins and eternal life” (Pfaff fragm. Anecd. S. Iren. pp. 26, 27, as quoted by Dr. Pusey). Dorner while opposing the position of Semisch just referred to, gives a summary of what he regards the doctrine of Irenæus. It may be found in a note on page 495 of the first volume of his “*Lehre v. d. Person Christi.*” “The outward elements, neither changed into Christ’s body and

blood, nor merely signifying them, nor again merely carrying in themselves the incarnate Logos, are rather, by means of the operation of the Holy Ghost on the one hand, and of Christ on the other, who assumes them, raised up to be momenta of his humanity and so through sacramental union therewith belong to the body and blood of Christ, who in them or through his sacramental connection with them continually restores for himself the momentum (otherwise withdrawn until his coming again) of his objective reality, presence and visibility (*der in ihnen, oder durch seine sacramentliche Verbindung mit ihnen, das bis zur Wiederkunft Christi zurueckgetretne Moment der objectiven Wirklichkeit, Gegenwart und Sichtbarkeit, sich fort wieder herstellt*), in such way of course as to be perceptible only to faith, as indeed the word of God and also Christ himself in his outward historical manifestation could be apprehended in their real character only by faith."

It has not been our object, however, to ascertain whether Irenæus leans more to the Lutheran, than to the Reformed doctrine of the Supper, but only to show with what unhesitating boldness he recognizes the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the mystery of the sacrament to nourish the faithful who participate thereof unto everlasting life, and that, in maintaining this reality of sacramental grace, he is in full harmony with the general church theory underlying the "Order of Worship." Who can doubt this for a single moment? Where is there the least syllable which may be said to be in opposition?

Here then we have the clear testimony of the second century, from those writers most thoroughly acquainted with the life of the Church, and most profoundly interested in her defence and progress,—a testimony upholding with full accord and with unhesitating conviction that idea of sacramental grace for the acknowledgment of which the "Order of Worship" of the German Reformed Church is now sought to be convicted of heresy. From the feet of the Apostles, these martyrs of the second century, part of that noble army which praises God, seem to know no other theory. Indeed it is so universally recognized, so uniformly assumed as fundamental to the very idea of the Church

and Christianity, that their writings fail to be intelligible in the atmosphere or light of any other system. This of itself should be enough to challenge the prayerful consideration of those who find their whole order of thought and faith in the element of another and contrary system. If puritanism is unwilling to open its eyes to such a historical reality, waving away as of but little account to itself the faith of the second century in this respect, it may expect the same irreverence to be paid to its own tradition and history. With assurance it appeals to the canon of Scripture, but with equal assurance also did the martyrs of the second century appeal to the Apostles whose very voice was still echoing in their ears. The force of such early historical testimony may be thought to be set aside with the pat theory that already the whole church was hastening into the apostasy of Roman Catholicism, and that this whole sacramental theory is itself the clear evidence of the testimony of such a complete revolution. But why perchance may not the force of puritan tradition be thought to be set aside by the theory that it is hastening into the apostasy of rationalism, in which the whole mystery of the supernatural is no longer a reality for faith? Why must puritanism of the nineteenth century be more secure from departure from Apostolic tradition, than the whole Church of the second century in which were many who saw the forms and heard the burning eloquence of the Apostles themselves, and with which the fresh fragrance of St. John's old age still lingered like the breath of love?

ART. II.—THE CHURCH DOCTRINE OF THE FORGIVENESS
OF SIN.

The sense of sin is universal. Not only are all men sinners, but all men feel that they are. From the broad, burdened bosom of heathenism arises a deep groan of misery from a sense of sin. Paganism, too, has sought after forgiveness of which it has a shadowy knowledge, and a vague belief. Hence it has its priests, altars, sacrifices, confessions, penances, ablutions, and prayers.

Among the unforgiven in Christian lands the same feeling exists. They may not clearly apprehend it—it may be only the cold, dreary absence of a peaceful sense—it may be the negative satisfaction of those who know of nothing better—even as one whose eyes have always been dim knows of nothing more lovely than that which he sees. As a stupid sinner, he may bear his burden, as a beast does his, regarding it as his fate, or as belonging to his nature. As one who somewhat reflects, he may attribute the shadows of his spirit to another source. As a deceived and blinded sinner, he may ease his spirit by strong delusions, imagining himself to be at rest and happy, even as a madman fancies himself a king, and a drunken man believes himself rich.

Wherever the sense of sin exists, there is also the foreshadowing of the doctrine of forgiveness, even where its blessedness is not enjoyed. What the sin-burdened heart needs, and thus unconsciously longs for, is graciously and clearly proclaimed by the Church: "That God, for the sake of Christ's satisfaction, will no more remember my sins, neither the sinful nature with which I have to struggle all my life long; but graciously imparts to me the righteousness of Christ, that I may never more come into condemnation."

The first thing to be known and kept in mind in regard to

the forgiveness of sins, is that it is a mercy in the Church, and not in the world—a truth known to faith, not to nature; and that it is to be understood and received in the Church, and by those who are in her bosom.

This is indicated by its location in the Creed. It follows the article of the Church, and does not precede it. As in the Creed, so in our faith, we come first to the Church, then into the communion of saints, and so to the forgiveness of sins.

On this point, Olevianus speaks as follows:—

“How dost thou understand the possession of the benefits of Christ in this life? I understand it thus: In like manner as there is no salvation to such as are out of the Church, which is the body of Christ, so also all those who are true and living members in the Church have now, and possess true salvation, which salvation we comprehend entire in the forgiveness of sins, as the Apostle Paul, Rom. iv. 7, 8, shows from Psalm xxxii. 1, 2, ‘Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.’”*

The sentiment is common—but as it is common so is it false—that the forgiveness of sin is to be obtained outside of and separate from the Church, and without its intervention—and that this boon is to be enjoyed before the Church is entered. Where this idea is held, it is supposed that the forgiveness of sin is a gift from the Holy Ghost direct, and without the medium of the Church. In that case, the Creed ought to run: “I believe in the Holy Ghost, the forgiveness of sin.” But it does not so run. Nor does it reach the forgiveness of sin, except passing through the intervening articles of the Holy Catholic Church, and the communion of saints.

The Holy Scripture plainly follows the same order; teaching that the remission of sin is to be obtained through the Church, by the intervention of its ministers and sacraments.

Our Saviour remitted sin directly, by a word, without any ministerial or sacramental intervention, because in Him dwelt

* Olevianus' *Fester Grund Christlicher Lehre*, p. 161.

the absolute and underived power to pardon. Matt. ix. 6. Mark ii. 10. Luke v. 24. He had power on earth to forgive sin. When He left the earth, He made provision for the continued exercise and application of that power on earth—not independent of Him, but from Him. Not at any one's caprice, but by an order of His own institution.

Hence we find that our Saviour, after His resurrection, met His disciples and said to them: "Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." St. John xx. 21-23.

How were they to remit, or retain sin? Not by words spoken, but by acts done. By receiving the penitent into the Church. This is plain from the passages parallel to the one quoted; where we find that our Saviour gives the binding and loosing, the remitting and retaining power to Peter (Matt. xvi. 19), and afterwards to all the disciples (Matt. xviii. 18), defining the way in which it is to be done: namely, "By the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." By the keys, as a figurative expression, our Saviour teaches His disciples, and through them His ministers, that as one man who has a right to the house, opens the door for another and admits him, so they, having a right to do so because He now appoints them, shall open the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Church, to seeking penitents, admitting them into it, and thus to the remission of sin.

If it be asked what the door is, that admits into the Church, and to the remission of sins, no one can be at a loss for the true answer. "We confess one Baptism for the remission of sins." The very act itself shows it to be a washing, cleansing—a putting away of defilement, and a putting on of Christ. (Gal. iii. 27). "Why tarriest thou?" said Ananias to Paul, "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." Acts xxii. 16. "Repent," said Peter to the penitents on Pentecost, "and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." Acts ii. 38. Rom. vi. Eph. v. 26.

Thus only through baptism, as an effect or result of it, are sins remitted. Thus only by entering the Church, and being in the communion of saints do we escape from the curse, and come to the "forgiveness of sins."

We must, however, not deceive ourselves with the idea that by a mere outward submission to baptism, are our sins remitted. Baptism itself must be rightly received. He that would receive the forgiveness of sin in baptism—where alone it is to be found—must not fail to connect with it what Christ has connected with it.

The following conditions must be fulfilled; and if fulfilled, full remission is given in baptism:

1. *Repentance.* This, in the case of adults, is connected with baptism and remission of sin, and must precede both. Luke xxiv. 47. Acts ii. 38. Acts v. 31.

A distinction must be made between the cause and the condition of the remission of sins. The cause is in what God has done, the condition is in what man does, moved thereto by "God's grace. The Reformed Church says with Calvin, that repentance is not the cause of remission of sins."*

2. *Confession.* "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John i. 9.

3. *Faith.* "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." Mark xvi. 16. Col. ii. 12.

4. *Purpose to leave sin.* Jesus said unto her, "Go, sin no more." John viii. 11. To the one who had had an infirmity thirty-eight years, and whom He had healed, He said, "Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." John v. 14. When Simon desired baptism, not as a means of getting free of his evil ways, but only as a power to continue the more successfully in them, it did not

* Inst. Book III., chap. iv. § 3.

benefit him, but left him as it found him, in the "gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity." Acts viii. Is. lv. 7.

The want of these hinder remission of sins by baptism, even as the want of sunshine, rain, and a proper soil hinder the life and growth of the planted seed; and when all these are present, baptism remits sin, or Christ, through this sacrament, as surely as the seed grows when all the conditions of growth are at hand.

In baptism, then, God signs and seals to such as receive it in penitence and faith the remission of their past sins. Their hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water. Heb. x. 22. In baptism, the apostle teaches, the old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed. Rom. vi. It is a burial with Christ into death; so that a rising with Him to a new life may then begin.

But this newness of life in which we are to walk from baptism (Rom. vi. 4), like all life, is not at once complete, but has its period of infantile feebleness, and is exposed to the infirmities and failings which intervene between "the babe" and the "full age" of a strong man in Christ. (Heb. v. 12-14). Though life reigns germ-like in the new, inward, spiritual man, yet, as the Canaanites, the old inhabitants of the land, and the old enemies of Israel still lingered to vex and war, and even to gain temporary, local victories, and were only at length fully subdued and cast out, so in the outward, old, natural man sin lingers and works, and wars against the new life which is casting it out more and more. The infirmities of nature which remain, the flesh from within, the world from without, and Satan from beneath, trammel and trip, and seduce the spirit into occasional sin. Hence we are still to pray, as in the Lord's prayer: "Forgive us our debts."

Thus, then, though in baptism past sin is remitted, there must be provision in the Church for the remission of after sins, and for assuring us that they are remitted that we may enjoy the necessary comfort and peace. This Christ has done in

leaving with His Church the power of the keys, not only to admit the penitent by baptism, but to restore him to pardon and peace when, through temptation, he has fallen from his baptism into sin. It is in immediate connection with the restoration of a fallen brother, that our Saviour assures His apostles, that they are invested with the power of binding and loosing. Matt. xviii. 15-22. He moreover tells them, that "until seventy times seven" times shall remission be granted him on repentance, and what they shall "loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Of this the penitent offender is sweetly assured in their act of pardon.

This power of absolution is always at hand to be exercised. If the Roman Church abused it, the Reformed Church did not therefore cast it away. At certain times, "according to the command of Christ, it is proclaimed and openly witnessed to believers, one and all, that so often as they accept with true faith the promise of the Gospel, all their sins are really forgiven them of God, for the sake of Christ's merits."*

Every time a true believer, penitent in view of his past sins, receives the holy supper of the Lord, the Church, through Christ's ministry, by His appointment and authority in that sacrament, most sweetly assures him, that he is "a partaker of the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross, and all His benefits."† One of these benefits is the remission of sins. Matt. xxvi. 28. "Paul directs that by the use of the Holy Supper we shall show forth the Lord's death till He come. 1 Cor. xi. 26. This wonder of all wonders, that God himself suffers death, to confirm His promises concerning the forgiveness of sins, must be proclaimed, believed, and highly praised. This is truly an assurance above all assurance, a faithfulness above all faithfulness."‡ To receive the Lord's Supper aright, is "to embrace with a believing heart all the sufferings and death of Christ, and thereby to obtain the forgiveness of sins and eternal life."§

* Quest. 84

† Heid. Cat., quest. 75.

‡ Olevianus' *Fester Grund*, p. 164.

§ Idem., quest. 76.

For "the Lord's Supper testifies to us, that we have full forgiveness of all our sins by the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which He Himself has once accomplished on the cross."*

This view of the forgiveness of sins, is the only one familiar to the early Reformed theologians. They knew nothing of that conception of this doctrine which makes it a human act, and places the assurance of it in the subjective fancy or feeling alone. In their system of the order of grace, the forgiveness of sins stands just where it does in the order of the Creed—that is, they make it a grace in the Church through sacramental ministries.

Thus Calvin, speaking of the Church, says: "It is also to be remarked, that out of her bosom there can be no hope of remission of sins, or any salvation."†

Calvin teaches that baptism is the sacrament of initiation into the Church, and so also of the remission of sin. "For He commands all who believe to be baptized for the remission of sins. Therefore those who have imagined that baptism is nothing more than a mark or sign, by which we profess our religion before men, as soldiers wear the insignia of their sovereign as a mark of their profession, have not considered that which was the principal thing in baptism; which is, that we ought to receive it with this promise, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' In this sense we are to understand what is said by Paul, that 'Christ sanctifies and cleanses the Church with the washing of water by blood;' and in another place, that 'according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost;' and by Peter, that 'Baptism doth save us.' For it was not the intention of Paul to signify, that our ablution and salvation are completed by the water, or that water contains in itself the virtue to purify, regenerate and renew; nor did Peter mean that it was the cause of salvation, but only that the knowledge and assurance of it is received in this sacrament."‡

* *Heid. Cat.*, quest. 80.

† *Inst. Book IV.*, chap. i. 4.

‡ *Inst. Book IV.*, chap. xv. 1, 2.

On the same ground, Calvin also sets forth the perennial or future force and virtue of baptism as the only basis and warrant of perpetual remission of sin in the Church. Thus he says: "Nor must it be supposed, that Baptism is administered only for the time past, so that for sins, into which we fall after baptism, it would be necessary to seek other new remedies of expiation in I know not what other sacraments, as if the virtue of baptism, were become obsolete. In consequence of this error, it happened, in former ages, that some persons would not be baptized except at the close of their life, and almost in the moment of their death, that so they might obtain pardon for their whole life—a preposterous caution, which is frequently censured in the writings of the ancient bishops. But we ought to conclude, that at whatever time we are baptized, we are washed and purified for the whole of life. Whenever we have fallen, therefore, we must recur to the remembrance of baptism, and arm our minds with the consideration of it, that we may be always certified and assured of the remission of our sins."

Calvin further insists, that absolution by the power of the keys, is itself indissolubly connected with baptism, and is in fact the means of its perpetual force or virtue. "I know the common opinion is, that remission of sins, which at our first regeneration we receive by baptism alone, is afterwards obtained by repentance and the benefit of the keys. But the advocates of this opinion have fallen into an error, for want of considering that the power of the keys, of which they speak, is so dependent on baptism, that it cannot by any means be separated from it. It is true, that the sinner receives remission by the ministry of the Church; but not without the preaching of the Gospel. Now, what is the nature of that preaching? That we are cleansed from our sins by the blood of Christ. What sign and testimony of that absolution is there, except baptism? We see, then how this absolution is referred to baptism."*

To the same effect are the words of Ursinus, setting forth

* Inst. Book IV., chap. xv. 4.

"*Certaine Conclusions of Baptisme.*" He says: "And as the Covenant once made with God, is also afterwards, after sins committed, perpetually firme and of force to the repentant, so also Baptisme being once received, confirmeth and assureth the repentant all their lifetime, of remission of sinnes; and therefore neither ought it to be re-iterated, neither to bee deferred untill the end of our life; as if it so only cleansed men from sinnes, if no sinnes be committed after it is once received."*

It may be said, and often is said that our forgiveness takes place in the divine mind, and that all we have to do is to seek it by prayer. Both these are true. But the question still comes up, How shall we be *assured* that we are pardoned? Do we say by the Spirit? We answer, yes. But we must also be assured, that what we feel as a sense of pardon, is by the Spirit, and not a feeling or a fancy only. The spirits themselves must be tried whether they be of God. (1 John iv. 1). The Spirit does not operate outside of the Church and independent of it, but in it, and through its word, sacraments and ordinances. These are Christ's institutions, which the Spirit does not set aside, but carry out; in them and by them the Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. John xvi. Thus, when we come as penitents, Christ in His Church, by His ministers, not only authoritatively and by a true and real commission, pronounces to us the words or promises of pardon, but signs and seals them by sacraments, as by divine acts, upon which the heart believes, is assured of pardon in a tangible way, and by a peace which passes all understanding, "the Spirit itself bears witness with"—not to—"our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. viii. 16). Thus the Spirit guides us into truth, not by speaking "of Himself," but by taking of Christ's and showing it unto us. (John xvi. 13-15). It is by the ordinances of Christ, in His Church, that the Spirit verifies to us His own work.

All our acts must be endorsed and met by divine acts. Penitence, prayer, confession, faith, and all experiences under the

* Dr. Parry's old English translation of Pareus' Ursinus, pp. 425, 426.

operations of grace are our acts; and these can nevermore verify themselves, but must be verified by divine acts. These divine acts are God's sacraments. They are not what we do to Him, but what God does to us. In baptism we are subjects, not actors—recipients, not factors—be baptized of God, not baptize thyself to Him. "Take eat"—not take give. In these divine acts, by the Church as commissioned for that purpose, all that we do is made valid and acknowledged before we can be assured that it is valid for us. Just as any legal paper, deed, must be signed and acknowledged by the State, though rightly drawn, before it is valid.

Without such an act in which our pardon is certified to us, our hearts cannot possess a full and satisfying sense of forgiveness. When a child has offended and grieved its parent, and goes about with penitent and sorrowing heart, the parent may have pardoned it in his own heart, and the child may fancy that it is pardoned; but it cannot be unerringly and comfortably assured of it except by the words and acts of the parent. The words must be heard, the smile, and the approach, as the act of reconciliation, must be seen, before the repenting heart can feel assured that its repentance is accepted by the parent, and the pardon actually given.

A sinner may be penitent for his sins, but until he has received baptism as God's act of remission to him, he has no true assurance of remission; and when, after baptism, he sins through infirmity, he cannot be sure of pardon till his absolution is spoken, signed and sealed by Christ, by means of a divine act through the Church. This truth is beautifully set forth in the parable of the Prodigal Son. He was penitent; and as a penitent returned. He confessed: "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." His father even gave him a strong token of welcome: "He had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Yet was the prodigal's heart full of fear and doubt. He repeated, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more

worthy to be called thy son." But now the father does that to him, which God does to the penitent sinner in the Church, gives him, through his servants, sacramental signs and seals of acceptance and pardon. "The father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry." Luke xv. 11-32.

Here comes a poor penitent who has been far away, and spent all in the world of sin. He thinks, in his misery, of the Church, in which his father dwells. He comes back, but full of fear. "Guilt holds him back and fear alarms." The father sees him, advances toward him with promises and show of mercy. But still the sinner trembles, and fears the wrath which his sins have most justly provoked. He cannot believe and confide, even though he sees smiles where he expected to see frowns; he stands still, even though he sees outstretched arms where he expected to see uplifted hands of warning and wrath. He answers every invitation and promise with the words: "Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in Thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son." But he hears the Father speak to his servants: Take the poor polluted, but penitent wanderer in sin, wash him in the water of baptism, and thus put My name on him, and bring him into My house. Give him a place among My saints. Make room for him at My table, and let him eat of the body of My beloved Son, and tell him it was broken for him; give him of the cup, and tell him it is the New Testament in His blood, which was shed for him for the remission of sins. Say this to him, as from Me. Thy sins, which were many, are all forgiven thee! Then there is joy in the house. Then there is joy among the angels. Then there is joy in the penitent's own heart. He hears the Father now say: "My son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." He doubts no more, but in the full assurance of hope, begins: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins."

ART. III.—FORCE OF RELIGIOUS IDEAS.

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There was a time when religious ideas and institutions were held up as the creation of designing men, who imposed them upon a credulous populace for the gratification of their own selfish purposes. It was taken for granted, that man was not constitutionally religious, but that, if he were left to himself, the development of his manhood would be normal and free from all the degrading influences of religious superstition. These views were boldly proclaimed by the vulgar infidelity of the last century; and the promulgators and defenders of them prided themselves as being particularly enlightened, as having discovered the true philosophy of human nature, and as being the apostles of a new era of emancipation. Never was there a more blind, a more arbitrary, and a more unphilosophical school in all history. It did not understand the mental and moral organism of man, nor did it derive any benefit from the universal experience of the race. Hence the explosion of its absurd dogmas, and the lowering of its flaunting banner to the dust.

The infidelity of our own day is of a somewhat different order. It has taken down the old banner and flung a new one to the breeze, and, instead of blasphemous frothing about priestcraft and popular credulity, we have now the bewitching song of sentimental piety. Religion is no longer treated as an imposture or a lie, but it is reduced to the level of a mere humanitarian scheme, for the accomplishment of secular or mundane ends simply. So then we have this modern infidel wolf in the garb of a lamb, wearing a sanctimonious air and mouthing religion to the world, but denying the divine supernatural character of that religion, which alone can demand faith and submission, on the part of the world, on truly historical and philosophical

grounds. That religious ideas are a normal, necessary, and ennobling part of our being all the world is now forced to acknowledge, and hence the change of base in the infidel camps. The tone of modern scepticism differs from that of a century ago as differeth the hoarse braying of an ass from the soft cooing of a dove. But this change of tactics will not help the case in the end, for it leaves the world still without a central power to moralize and civilize the nations, by placing man into a normal relationship to the author of his being. Christianity, in its proper mystical and sacramental character, has proven itself to be a world-historic fact, which readily meets and satisfies all the legitimate demands of our nature, and whatever sets itself up against its claims is the enemy, not only of religion and the kingdom of heaven as such, but of human progress and elevation. Let the voice of history tell the destiny that is likely to come upon all the lying spirits, that preach another gospel than that of Jesus Christ.

Christianity differs from all other systems, not in degree simply, but in kind. The mythologies of the pagan world were not wholly false and corrupt. They maintained the principles of morality in some degree, and, in the days of their primitive power, they wielded an influence which was largely instrumental in promoting good order and prosperity in society. But they were constructed by men, who knew not the truth beyond the power of their natural ken, and who, though great and wise, did not possess the true knowledge of either God or man. The gigantic efforts of Greek and Roman statesmen and philosophers to organize society properly and to place its manners on a firm and solid foundation are worthy of profound respect, but many of their dogmas were revolting and can only be excused on the ground of ignorance. In course of time these mythological absurdities became apparent and religious ideas began to grow weak in consequence, and then society entered upon a course of corruption, that brought the race to the very verge of despair and threatened to end in the complete dissolution of all moral and social ties. Such a crisis the race had reached, when Jesus Christ first proclaimed Himself Messiah, and took the reins of

the moral universe into His own divine-human hands. When that glorious era of the gospel commenced, the convictions of men were made to rest on the world historic facts of the life of Christ, and public conscience was placed under the beneficent sway of Christian faith and charity.

Jesus addressed Himself to the people. His gospel is a mystery, but not that sort of a mystery, which must hide itself from the popular gaze. The deeper it is looked into, the more it is admired, and loved, and cherished. It is hidden, not because it is concealed, but because the grace and glory thereof cannot now be fully seen by mortal eye, or heard by mortal ear, or enter into the soul of man to be fully conceived. The Lord taught the people, and raised up men in the Church, age after age, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, who continued the same blessed work, and thus the nations learned those sublime maxims of religion and morality, which are now universally accepted as the groundwork of the highest form of civilization and as the only guarantee of human progress and redemption. Gibbon wrote a very able work on the decline and fall of the Roman empire, in which he betrays no small measure of malevolent hate against Christianity, as the cause of the decline and downfall of Roman civilization, and the ruin of the brilliant institutions of the empire. Had he been able to divest himself of his low and vulgar prejudices, and to raise himself up to the broad and generous level of evangelical propagandism, as this stands prominent in all the colossal movements of Christian ages, and gives tone and vigor to the progressive energies of modern times, he would have found a thousand reasons to admire and extol the grandeur and beneficent glory of the force, that pulled down the institutions of pagan Rome, and reared upon the ruins thereof that new order of civilization, which history and science join to celebrate, as the sum of all that is dear and ennobling to man.

But let us come now to a few specific facts, by which these general statements may be corroborated and the subject of religious ideas be made to stand in its own practical light.

The Church was concerned primarily with the spiritual wants of men, but her manner of meeting these was such as ultimately

involved all the issues of life. The inauguration of the gospel was no mere scheme of moral or religious reform, but it was the beginning of a new life, the introduction of a world revolutionizing and world saving power. To the individual, it opened and explained the mysterious enigma of his being, gave him the key to his origin, and his condition and destiny, and imbued him with proper conceptions of his dignity and rights. To such lessons men every where listened, and hence a new light shone in upon their souls. They began to think, not only of their personal regeneration, repentance, piety and holiness, but also of their inalienable rights, and carried with them these progressive ideas of the gospel, into all the relations of life. Where the pagan order of civilization still holds full sway, the individual will lay his head on the block, or disembowel himself, in obedience to blind force or irresponsible power, whilst in Christian lands he demands a hearing and insists upon his chartered rights. Whence this difference? Undoubtedly paganism is blind, selfish, tyrannical, because it is of man; but Christianity, being of God, is true, just, pure, beneficent. The one degrades man and takes away his most sacred prerogatives; the other elevates and saves him in all his relations. In a word, the religion of Jesus places man into a normal relation and urges him forward to a normal destiny; whereas all other systems and schemes, whether ancient or modern, have always failed to comprehend his real condition and to give him proper impulses.

Among the many evils which Christianity found in the world, the institution of slavery was a very general one, and very difficult to correct and remove, because it was so intimately interwoven with the prejudices and material interests of society. Any direct interference with it could not have succeeded, nor does it appear, that it would have been a benefit to either bond or free, if revolutionary measures could have at once been carried into effect. At any rate, the Church did not pursue that course, and yet she undertook the benign task of emancipation from the very start in every legitimate way, and her efforts have been crowned with glorious success. She used no carnal weapons, however, but conquered by the force of religious ideas.

The dogmas of individual rights, dignity and destiny, heralded by Christ and His Church are inimical to all forms of human oppression and bondage, and these dogmas corrected ideas and put the question of emancipation on moral grounds. Heathen philosophy recognised no higher motives in the matter than those of political necessity, and it is easy to see, therefore, considering the political and moral condition of the world, that the task was not only difficult, but that it required the pious and self-denying efforts of ages. The genius of ecclesiastical propagandism was radical and revolutionary in the fullest and best sense. It did not stop with the settlement of dogmas and the spread of ideas, but led to the destruction of the institution with which it was concerned. In this manner was there introduced into modern civilization that element of progress, which has since accomplished such gigantic results. The tenor of ecclesiastical legislation on this subject is extremely interesting. The degrading tenets of heathenism were at once and forever rejected, and slavery was dealt with, not as a normal development, but as an evil brought in by sin. Individual theologians and particular sections of the Church may have revived the disgraceful heresies of the ancient world, but the living preponderating mass of Christian thinking has always been true to the tenor of the gospel, and the work of modern emancipation is the fruit of the ideas and self-denying labors of the covenanted followers of Jesus Christ.

Public beneficence is also a distinctively Christian production, and it stands prominent as one of the benign monuments of Christian ideas. It was begotten by that same spirit, which broke the bonds of the slave, and left the oppressed go free. A common human origin and a common destiny by faith in Jesus Christ, laid hold on the sympathies of men, and the work of Christian charity commenced. The Saviour was full of love and mercy, why should not His people be inspired by the same spirit? How could they worship at the foot of the Cross, and not remember the widow, and the orphan, and the sick, and the poor, and the oppressed, and the captive? Such were the objects and motives that first gave rise to hospitals, and asylums and

associations for the work of charity. It was an undertaking of no small magnitude, and it required efforts and sacrifices of the noblest and yet most trying character. The movement came in conflict with the prejudices and selfishness of the world, and the Church was poor and persecuted, but a strong, honest Christian conviction inspired the disciples of Jesus, and hence success was sure to follow. At this age of our era, when the establishment of benevolent institutions is the order of the day, and when benevolent habits are common in society, we find it difficult to appreciate the difficulties that stood in the way of Christian beneficence in the earlier ages of the Church. Could we transfer ourselves back to those ages and realize the state of things that then existed, we would then be more capable of feeling how much we owe to the force of the religious ideas, which gave nerve to our primitive Christian ancestry to undertake and accomplish the work. Individual beneficence may exist where religious ideas are not in force, but public beneficence never can. It is the warm pulsating flow of Christian piety alone, that can give proper vigor and impetus to measures of public charity, and make society forget its own selfish interests in the generous work of relieving the unfortunate and the needy. And as the Church has done this great work, when all the world had neither the will nor the moral capacity to undertake it, to her, under God, belongs the honor of having infused a generous spirit into society, and of having laid the foundations of modern benevolence.

One of the principal elements of the social economy is the family, and the happiness of individuals, and the prosperity of nations depends in a great measure on the religious ideas, by which this institution is governed and guarded. Where it is left to the promptings of individual caprice, and stripped of the dignity of a sacred divine order, sacred both in law and public opinion, society cannot but be destitute of a high moral tone, and at the mercy of such disorganizing tendencies as will blast the connubial bliss of households and hasten the downfall of nations. The voice of history cannot be mistaken on this subject. It speaks in thundering tones. The civilization of Greece and

Rome carried with it a wholesome degree of moral earnestness, in reference to this matter, in the early history of those nations. In fact the institutions of Romulus made the marriage tie indissoluble, and, although the twelve tables allowed the freedom of divorce to the husband, the republic had stood five hundred years when the first instance of divorce took place, and then the measure was loaded with public opprobrium. While this state of the popular mind lasted, the nation maintained its liberties; but, when they began to grow indifferent to the sanctity of the marriage relation, corruption of manners gained full sway, legal checks could no longer be enforced, and the republic perished. In modern history, we have the appalling facts of the famous French revolution, as a solemn warning. That revolution swept away the usages of ages and tore up by the roots the sanctity of religion. It made special war against the marriage contract, and in the space of two years and three months, it effected six thousand divorces in the city of Paris alone. The results of this infamous frenzy are well known. Now if heathen antiquity and modern infidel madness have reaped such bitter fruits from leaving marriage at the mercy of unrestrained passion and caprice, is it not high time that Christian nations, at the present day, and especially the American people, should begin to inquire, whether we have not been carried into the same downward course and are drifting towards the same whirlpool of social and national ruin?

Let it not be forgotten, that Christianity is the mother of our modern civilization. The Church, in all ages, has sustained the sanctity and indissolubility of the marriage bond; and she has, therefore, been the chief instrument in organizing society in its present form. The Catholic Church of the middle ages, is charged with wholesale corruption and apostasy. So far do many go as to make her the synagogue of the devil, which could but cripple the energies, and blast the hopes of nations. No one, however, who has looked into history with an unprejudiced eye, will pretend to deny, that, in spite of her apostasy and corruption, she has firmly maintained the orthodox Christian dogma of the divine institution of marriage, and manfully resisted the

dissolution of the marriage bond, and that, therefore, the colossal moral revolution of the medieval period, and the triumphant success of modern civilization, are mainly due to her influence. Protestantism is firmly committed to the same dogma of the divinity and sanctity of the institution. Yes, it lays claims to even greater evangelical earnestness, and an incomparable superiority in morals. Who now is responsible for some of our recent astounding developments in reference to divorce? Our laws and manners are not what they were a quarter of a century ago relative to this subject. We are evidently drifting away from the ancient religious foundations, and are giving ourselves up to the misery, the caprice, the shame of a godless nationality.

If this is not so, what then mean these frequent divorces? We count them by hundreds, and even thousands, in a single State annually, and no measures are taken, either by the people or the Churches, to change the laws, or to reform public opinion. If religious ideas have not lost much of their force among us, and we have not unconsciously fallen in with the infidel spirit of the times, and are now swooning under the fearful nightmare of an appalling religious indifference or scepticism, why then this popular listlessness with regard to a matter so closely interwoven with the social, moral, religious, and political welfare of the country? The time for alarm and for action has come. It is the business of the States to see that the laws are corrected, but the reform of public opinion lies principally with the churches, and with the educational agencies of the land. If these fail to realize the solemnity of their trust, and check not the licentious tendencies and caprices of the hour, national degeneracy will run its course, and the destruction of our republican liberties will be certain to follow.

The Sunday question, which now extensively agitates the popular mind, may also claim some attention in this connection. It will not be necessary to take into consideration the orthodoxy of the theological opinions, which have ruled much of our American thinking on the subject of the Sabbath. We are not called upon to decide, whether the more stringent or the more liberal views of evangelical Christendom must be taken, as the

true sense of the Gospel. All we need say here is, that the Sunday, as it has been observed among us, is a religious institution, established, guarded, and preserved by the religious ideas of the American people, and as such it was one of the main elements of our past national strength and popular freedom. A wholesale departure from our deep, moral earnestness in reference to this question, would no doubt be a national calamity. We need not dwell upon it now, however, as it is already fully before the public mind, and will, doubtless, be brought to a satisfactory settlement. But, perhaps, it will be necessary to repeat, that it is one of those peculiar institutions and sources of good manners, which religion alone can establish and maintain. If the force of religious ideas be destroyed, the Sabbath, or Lord's day, will be but a mockery. All sacred or festive seasons must necessarily be backed and supported by the strong motives of popular piety, or cease to be bulwarks of public order and national prosperity.

There are other facts that might be brought forward as belonging to the same order with those had under discussion, but we have been sufficiently particular to show the practical bearing of our subject, and to prove the force and absolute necessity of religious ideas. Shall we now plead for the future maintenance of such ideas, and for the support of the institutions necessary to give them proper practical force and vigor? It might be taken for granted, that a Christian people of such noted intelligence, moral earnestness, and piety, as we generally receive credit for, would not need any appeals of this sort. But, alas, experience proves only too conclusively, that the interests of private and public morality can no where be left to undirected popular impulse. Our very freedom demands the constant presence of organized Christian effort, and of the most powerful Christian motives. Intelligence and sound Christian morality are the only safeguards of our institutions, and these require the support of orthodox and liberal Christian ideas. Are we in a condition to meet the exigencies of the times, and to preserve the glorious birthright bequeathed to us by our fathers?

Germany has had her reign of scepticism and rationalistic infidelity. The master minds of that country took their refuge to the simple Christian faith, as it has ruled the world for eighteen hundred years, as the only ark of safety, for both them individually, and the nation. Upon this foundation they planted themselves, and made it the rule of all their thinking, and of all their endeavors. They have given us a fresh, a vigorous, a live Christological theology, which is not only firmly grounded in biblical lore, but deeply rooted in the historic Christological mysteries of the Church Catholic of all ages. With these weapons they entered the arena, and beat the enemy, and the saving power of true sacramental Christian piety is once more successfully restored in the land of the Reformation. If this was the only means of redemption for the great Germanic nationality, with its characteristic intellectual vigor, and high scientific and literary culture, how much more does our young, practical Anglo-American nationality need the simple, but potent facts of the gospel, as a solid basis of its moral and political destiny! Of all the moral and spiritual potentialities the world ever knew, that of the personality of Jesus Christ stands without a parallel. The world has been unconsciously drawn towards it, and ruled and regenerated by it; and in it centres the life and the hope of the world, now and forever. Then let American mind, American piety, American civilization, be ever brought into living contact with this personality; conceived, born, afflicted, and dead; but risen and ascended, and sitting at the right hand of the Father in glory, head over all things to the Church; let, we repeat it, our American nationality, in its civil, moral, and religious integrity, ever be brought into living relationship with the personality of the God-man, Jesus Christ, and this nation will stand a monument, not only of increasing greatness, and popular prosperity, but of Christian purity, and progressive generosity.

It is easy to see, then, that no order of piety can satisfy the demands of the times, that is not in living sympathy with the deep, Christological ideas of the past. It must find its proper home and support in the sacramental order or economy, which we call the Church. No religious or pietistic sentimentalism

will answer. The issues of the age are by far too potent and too radical to be mastered by anything short of a popular Christian consciousness, that comes supported by all the force of Christian antiquity, and moves, throughout, with the dignity and the unction of a divine economy. The old ideas of the kingdom of grace, or of the Covenant—of the altar, of the ministry, of the sacraments, of worship, of the Church as a whole—must once more become familiar to the people, in order that the nation and the world may be saved. This is no revival of sectarian narrowness and bigotry; it is the plea of Christian civilization over against the misery and helplessness of the uncovenanted world. It involves all the practical issues of the age, and must be considered in connection with all the interests of mankind. The movement is, however, not a mechanical one—a mere return to the traditions and customs of the past. No, the spirit of the times moves in no such fixed grooves. The process, though historical and conservative, is still free and progressive. It must be in living sympathy and rapport with the Creed, and all its legitimate associations, in ancient and modern times. In a word, it must be truly and absolutely Christian, and assert its divine claims and prerogatives in the world, in a truly historical and sacramental way; and thus sustain, and preserve, and bring to its final perfection, the glorious work of human redemption, as this was begun and continued by the same order of divine life in days gone by.

We are well aware, that this view of the case does not agree with the reigning religious thinking of this country; for our American Christianity is prevailingly of a spiritualistic order, and looks with suspicion upon every movement, that indicates the revival of deep Christological ideas. Yet it is clear on all hands, that a radical revolution in American theology is already fully inaugurated, and that our Churches are unconsciously, perhaps, but irresistibly drawn into the current. What a difference there is, for instance, between the popular religious temper of to-day, and twenty or more years ago, with reference to church architecture, religious culture, Christian festivals, public worship, and other questions of the same kind! Then,

the Creed, the Cross, the Festivals, Books of Common Prayer, and every thing of that kind, was denounced as a relic of Popery, and as inimical to spiritual or evangelical religion; now Unitarianism, and New England Puritanism, are even becoming reconciled to these ancient symbols and customs, and some of their leading minds begin to look upon them, as an essential measure to save American Protestantism from ultimate dissolution and ruin. If we consider the self-sufficient tone of this same order of American religious life some years back, we might regard it as somewhat surprising, that its temper has so soon been changed. The case assumes, however, a different aspect, when the instinct of self-preservation is taken into view, and when we remember that there has been a revival of a live, Christological, or Christo-centric theology, both in Europe and in this country, which has made itself felt in many circles, where at first it was not, by any means, cordially received.

What a time there was, when Mercersburg began, with characteristic fervor and integrity, to lift up her voice against the dangerous popular heresies of the day, and to promulgate those Christological ideas that have since become so familiar to our people. There was one universal burst of indignation, coming from professedly evangelical quarters, and hurling the charge of heresy against Mercersburg and the German Reformed Church, for reviving what was then regarded as the errors of Romish superstition, and for opposing what was taken to be the only true form of spiritual Christian piety. But those days are gone, and so is much of the indiscreet zeal, that was then volunteered in our behalf. Since then things generally have slightly changed, and so have theological opinions; not among ourselves only, but elsewhere also. It gives us pleasure to know, that we were among those who led the way, and that others have seen fit to follow with us. We may not receive credit for anything of this kind, but that makes no difference, if only the interests of religion, and of humanity are secured. With a view to that end, we have discussed the subject of religious ideas, and urged the demands of modern civilization. Sure we are, that this question demands a hearing all the world over, and

especially in our own land, and that it cannot be ignored with impunity by either American politics or religion. The dawn of a new era is upon us. Let us see that we mistake not its prophetic forebodings. Live facts are stronger than prejudice, and that theology which is fullest of the mystical, world-historical life of the incarnate Saviour, will doubtless gain the day.

ART. IV.—THE SECOND ADAM, AND THE NEW BIRTH:

Or the doctrine of Baptism as contained in Holy Scripture. By the Rev. M. F. Sadler, M. A., Vicar of Bridgwater. Author of "The Sacrament of Responsibility." From the Second enlarged London Edition. Baltimore, Md. Joseph Robinson, 1862: pp. 244.

BY REV. J. W. SANTEE, A. M., CAVETOWN, MD.

An interesting volume, worthy of being read and studied by ministers and lay members of the Christian Church. Its object, as the author says, "is to give, in as plain terms as possible, the Scripture testimony to the doctrine of the Initial Sacrament." Its language is plain, and the book is calculated for all classes of readers, and is really "a hand book of Scripture reference on the subject of Baptismal doctrine." The subject of "Baptismal doctrine" is here presented in such a light, that the importance of it cannot escape the attention of the earnest reader, no matter how little he may be inclined to believe, that grace is really offered in sacramental transactions. It is really an exhaustive Scripture argument on the doctrine of Holy Baptism as taught in the Word of God, and believed by the Christian Church, when "one Baptism for the remission of sins" is confessed. In a work of this kind, so thoroughly scriptural, little room is allowed for criticism, and it will, accordingly, be our object to show, as well as we can, the line of argument followed by the author, in the unfolding of his subject.

Of late years the importance of the doctrine of Holy Baptism has received more attention than formerly. It cannot be denied, that there has been a serious falling away from the doc-

trine as originally held, and that there is room still for the charge, is evident from the little account made of it, as may be inferred from the few baptisms, comparatively, reported in large and influential denominations. And it is but fair to say, that all this falling away took place in the face of creeds and confessions, distinctly asserting, that *grace is offered in baptism*, which, however, have been repudiated as "fossil relics," and these old, apostolic landmarks, have been flung to the winds. In this way there has been a silent process going on, undermining this old, ancient faith, which acknowledged "one Baptism for the remission of sins," and the way has been, and is now, preparing for a reign of rationalism and infidelity, surely coming, which will try our "Evangelical Protestantism" to the very utmost when contending for mastery. This question of Baptism lies at the very threshold of a sound, orthodox theology, and the denial of its importance has been conceding ground into the hands of the enemy, which is beginning to tell in this fearful struggle. The question is fundamental.

It cannot be disguised, that from this stand-point there spring two theories, advocated by men of talent and influence; the one insisting on the necessity of Baptism, and so an ingrafting into Christ, because of original depravity; while the other denies such necessity, and is willing to believe, that it is useless, and that all children, baptized or not, are in the same condition; and that the Sacrament of Baptism gives no advantage by conferring grace. That this latter view is wide-spread, is evident from the fact, that so little stress is laid on the rite; and in our own denomination (with a little change in the view we have quoted), it is held by some, "that Baptism does not make our children Christians; they are such before baptism." * In opposition to views like these, this book comes, with a force that cannot be resisted, and proves, by the Word of God, that they are untenable, contrary to the teaching of the Reformers, and con-

* This idea is erroneously attributed to Ursinus, and that he did not hold a sentiment like this is ably shown in the Oct. No. of this Review: Art. "The old distinction between 'Gemeinde' and 'Kirche.'"

trary to the faith of the Ancient Christians, as well as the teaching of the Apostles.

What is our state by nature? Are children, as above quoted, Christians before Baptism? The answer to an inquiry like this, is distinctly given by the Word of God, and as it was held by the Christian Church always, as expressed in Creeds and Confessions. Here there can be no uncertain sound. Take, for instance, the following, taken from the Presbyterian Confession of Faith: "They (our first parents) being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation." "From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions." "Original sin is conveyed from our first parents unto their posterity by natural generation, so as all that proceed from them in that way, are conceived and born in sin." So the Augsburg Confession. * * * "Since the fall of Adam all men, who are naturally born, are begotten and born in sin." So also Luther's Catechism, and our own Heidelberg Catechism. Quest. 7 and 8. Then, too, Ps. li. John iii. 6, &c., &c. What is to be made out of this belief coming down through ages? Is it a fact, so clearly stated, and firmly asserted; and is the contrary view unscriptural and untrue? So it is affirmed, and the denial of this doctrine has been declared, over and over again, as heresy. It is easy to see now, that, starting from such a premise, fundamental as it is, heretical as it has been declared, the poison from it will flow through all the teaching and preaching, and become the source of endless mischief, and, perhaps, to many a soul, of spiritual shipwreck. There are some, and the number may be large, of the ministry and the laity, who cannot frame their lips to say, much less in heart believe, "that they present this child, and seek for it deliverance from the power of the Devil, the remission of sin, and the gift of a new and spiritual life by the Holy Ghost," &c.; and then, "Do you, in the name of this child, renounce the Devil with all his ways and works, the world with its vain pomp

and glory, and the flesh with all its sinful desires." And yet Reformers taught it, and Ancient Christians believed it.*

An interesting question now arises: Whence does this depravity come? How are children affected by being born by natural generation? Are they, in that innocent state, Christians before Baptism, without any stain, or without being "conceived and born in sin," as we are often told, and as is taught? Here, again, there is no uncertain sound. The Christian Church has but one voice on the subject—our own Catechism is most explicit on this point. The Word of God is decided. Then the clear statement of the author, "God, in His all-wise purpose, ordained that the race of mankind should spring from one parent. Adam was the fountain from which the whole river of human being was to flow. He was the root from which the whole tree of human life was to spring. God ordained, that he should transmit his human nature, whatever that nature might be, to his posterity, so that, if he continued holy, he should transmit to them a holy nature; but that if he became sinful, he must, of necessity, transmit to them a sinful nature. Through his own free will he ate of the forbidden fruit, and became sinful; and this before any children had been born to him; so that when he begat children, he transmitted to them, not the sinless nature which he possessed originally, but the sinful nature which he received the moment he transgressed. Hence the fountain of human nature became poisoned at its source; the root of human nature became evil before a single branch or bud had sprung out of it. Hence, when Adam begat children, they were in his likeness. Hence all mankind are sinners from the womb. . . . We find the children of godly parents, who have seen in their parents a holy example, show the same seed,

* In the Palatinate Liturgy of 1563, in the form of Baptism, in the address, it is said, ". . . that it be trained up in the Lord Jesus Christ, and admonished, that by the reception of the sign and seal of this divine covenant, in Baptism, it renounced the devil and the world, with all their works and lusts," &c. Query. If it renounced the devil and the world, did the framers of this old, venerable German Ref. Liturgy, believe, that children were under that power, and is that, in the "Order of Worship," something new, or an innovation?

and of evil as the children of the ungodly." p. 8-9. There is something wonderful in this awful mystery; and yet there is the fact, that in a state of unconsciousness, there is the transmission of moral evil—planting in the offspring the seeds which ripen in sin. The human family is not to be conceived as atomistic, where each one is for himself, becomes what he is by imitation; but as one whole, in which each one stands in a life common to all. In this view, each one (and this will be so to the end of time) "is conceived and born in sin." "Our first parent, in whose loins were all his posterity, sinned, and so received into his nature the seeds of corruption, both moral and physical; and he begat children in his own likeness—not only with outward frames like his, but with souls like his in their taint of evil. And he transmitted to each one, that was engendered of him and of his offspring, the corruption he had received. To each unconscious babe he transmitted the corruption which he himself had received in a state of the highest moral consciousness." Rom. v. 12, 14, 19, p. 10. It is clear, that all are involved in the fall, and share in the bitter consequences; and that, in this state, "we are wholly incapable of doing any good, and inclined to all wickedness." In Adam all is lost. Shall there be now no release, for infants as well as adults, from this state of sin? Have we not an intimation of redemption in the promise made at the first? "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." A remedy for sin was to be provided, and the woes of humanity relieved. Man had fallen, but God provided a Redeemer.

In the sublime fact, "The Word was made flesh," we have an act of love surpassing comprehension. In Jesus Christ, the Second Adam, we have gained what was lost by the first. Here we have an entrance into our life of one "not born in the way of nature, but by miracle"—not in sin, as every other human being had been born, but sinless: one of whom alone it could not be said, "He was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did his mother conceive him." He was man, in all points, like unto us, sin

excepted, "so that the same human nature which had sinned should likewise make satisfaction for sin;" and he was divine, "that he might, by the power of his Godhead, sustain, in his *human nature*, the burden of God's wrath," etc. Man had fallen, the race was corrupt, the Redeemer had to impart a new life, so that man could be forgiven and pardoned. In order to this, a source of life had to be opened—the moral corruption of our nature had to be counteracted—the seed of sin, ending in death, rooted up, so that life and health could be imparted. In the Person of our Blessed Lord, we have the Second Adam—the fountain of a new order of life to the world. He, in and by whom sin is forever destroyed—the Bread of Eternal Life—the fountain of Living Water. As in Adam, the race starts and flows on continually, every member of it sharing in the corruption—in sin: so in Jesus Christ, a new life starts, of a higher order, in which life, in some way, every one must share, in order to obtain eternal life. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." To effect this end, it pleased God, in Infinite Wisdom, to insert into our sinful race this sinless One, to atone for sin, and to restore unto it righteousness and Life. As our Mediator, he offered Himself for the race, and in some way, mysterious to the human mind, God accepted the offering, that "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." As in Adam, we have opened the fountain of corruption, ever repeating itself in the transmission of moral evil, so in Jesus Christ there is opened the fountain to Life. "The first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening (*i. e.*, life-imparting) Spirit." 1 Cor. xv. 45. But how can this be? How can Christ, the Life, so impart Himself to His people, to be Eternal Life to them? The author answers, "By the power of the Holy Ghost. The especial work of the Holy Ghost, in the economy of Grace, is to make Christ present. The Spirit does not, in this dispensation, regenerate and strengthen man by Himself, as it were, but by the very life and strength of the Second Adam, Jesus Christ,—Christ, not as God, for as God He is every where, but the

whole Christ—the Christ who is “perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting.” “I mean a mystical and supernatural presence—a presence for the most wondrous and gracious of purposes, to make us partakers of a new life,—but, withal, a presence infinitely above our comprehension, because the presence of the nature of one infinitely above our comprehension; because, again, the presence within us of the nature of a spiritual body, of which spiritual body we know nothing. I mean a presence above nature, and brought about in a way infinitely above nature, through the power and working of God’s Almighty Spirit.” That this is no new view, but reaches far back, is seen from the following extract: “To all things He (Christ) is life, and to men light as the Son of God. . . . Adam is in us as an original cause of our nature, and of that corruption of nature which causeth death: Christ as the cause original of restoration to life. The person of Adam is not in us, but his nature, and the corruption of his nature derived into all men by propagation: Christ, having Adam’s nature as we have, but incorrupt, deriveth not nature, but incorruption, and that immediately from His own Person, into all that belong unto Him. As, therefore, we are really partakers of the body of sin and death received from Adam, so, except we be truly partakers of Christ, and as really possessed of His Spirit, all we speak of eternal life is but a dream. Doth any man doubt but that even from the flesh of Christ our very bodies do receive that life which shall make them glorious at the latter day, and for which they are accounted parts of His Blessed body? Our corruptible bodies could never live the life they shall live, were it not that here they are joined with His body, which is incorruptible, and that His (body) is in ours as a cause of immortality, a cause by removing through the death and merit of His own flesh that which hindered the life of ours. Christ is therefore, both as God and as man, that true Vine whereof we both spiritually and corporally are branches,” *etc.* Eccles. Pol. Book V., Ch. 46, Sec. 9.

“Still it (the flesh of Christ) is properly said to be life-giving, as it is pervaded with the fulness of life for the purpose

of transmitting it to us. . . . Accordingly, he shows that in His humanity also fulness of life resides, so that every one who communicates in His flesh and blood, at the same time, enjoys the participation of life. As water is at one time drunk out of the fountain . . . so the flesh of Christ is like a rich and inexhaustible fountain, which transfuses into us the life flowing forth from the Godhead into itself. Now, who sees not that the communion of the flesh and blood of Christ is necessary to all who aspire to the heavenly life? Hence those passages of the Apostle: The Church is the 'Body of Christ,' 'His fulness,' 'He is the Head, from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, maketh increase of the body.' Eph. i. 23; iv. 15, 16. Our bodies are the 'members of Christ.' We perceive that all these things cannot possibly take place unless he adheres to us wholly in body and in spirit. But the very close connection which unites us to His flesh, he illustrated with still more splendid epithets, when he said that 'we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.' Eph. v. 30. At length, to testify that the matter is too high for utterance, he concludes with exclaiming 'This is a great mystery.' Ep. v. 32." Calvin's Institutes, Book IV., Chap. 17, Sec. 9.

To effect the object of the Redeemer's mission, and to carry on this great work, in and for His people, He institutes His Church—His Body—in which He is ever present, according to His own promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." This is a glorious order from God, let down from heaven—an order supernatural—possessing forces and powers for the great purposes of human redemption. It is not a system of doctrine, not a scheme or system of religion, "but it is a heavenly, spiritual state of things, introduced by our Saviour, for the purpose of counteracting a carnal, sinful state of things, introduced into the world by the sin of the first Adam." In this order, salvation *only is possible*, as the *Presbyterian Confession* says, concerning the Church, "*out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.*" But how shall that which is born of the flesh obtain entrance into this "heav-

only state of things?" Is there a necessity to enter? Assuredly. Entrance into this glorious order is alone by complying with the terms of admission, "He that believeth and is *baptized*." There is something wonderful in all this, that to an entrance into that order where life is, the immortal spirit should consciously recognize the Redeemer and lay hold on His blessed offers, and yet that all this should be in connection with the washing, as declared by "being baptized." How different this from the theory held and taught in our day. The New Birth is looked upon as the same event in the history of the soul, in which there is a turning from the world to God, making our ingrafting into Christ and conversion one and the same fact; and yet our Divine Redeemer lays down a different order when Nicodemus inquires from Him, and there again connects this New Birth with water, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." So again in the Apostolic commission, "Go ye, *therefore*, and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. So, too, after the effusion of the Holy Ghost, when the Living Truth came to the hearts of the people, and three thousand anxious souls asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" we have again the water, "*a baptism for the remission of sins*." Acts ii. 38. In the case of Saul, who persecuted the Church, when God confronted him, and when the glorified Redeemer said to him, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," this converted man was directed to go to Damascus, and there he should be told what to do, and here again we have the water, "Arise, and *be baptized, and wash away thy sins*." Acts xxii. 38. Another world from that which would have said, Come to the anxious seat and be converted. Whether all this is to be set down as a "Romanizing tendency," or whether it is to be regarded as "High Church Puseyism," or "Extreme Ritualism," there we read it—so it was believed—so the Lord Jesus taught.

What shall this entrance, by Baptism, into this supernatural order be called? What is the relation which it effects?—It is incorporating (*einverleibet*) into Christ—grafting into Him, who is the Second Adam. Our author calls it "the Grace of Re-

generation. Regeneration is that in the Kingdom of God, which answers to original sin in the kingdom of evil. As original sin is the partaking of Adam's nature, so regeneration is the partaking of Christ's." What is Regeneration? A gifted writer answers: "It is the effect of that gift of grace which the Father of all mercies was pleased to embody in the manhood of the Incarnate Son, that thereby humanity at large might be re-constructed: and which, in Him and by Him, is received by those happy members of the family of man to whom the Gospel comes, and by whom it is not rejected through unbelief or impenitence. . . . *It is Christ taking up His dwelling in man.*" Let us be careful and not confound terms. Regeneration is not Conversion, neither is it repentance. Being born again, is "by water and the Spirit." To apply the word regeneration, as is ordinarily done, to conversion, is systematically to ignore that *initial* grace, which is given to men as the foundation, so to speak, the root of future "newness of life," continual daily turning to God. "Regeneration and Conversion are two different terms, differently derived, presenting two different ideas—the one *birth*, at the commencement of a life; the other, turning in the middle of a walk. They are never interchanged in Scripture. I do think these considerations, if realized, shut us up, as it were, to the one change that the Church has always attached to these words—the Baptismal grafting into Christ." p. 25. In this act, then, there is a grafting into Christ—the implanting of a Divine Seed—the root for future "newness of life." That this ingrafting is not the same as Conversion is clear, and these terms were held separate from the earliest times. So Justin Martyr, Apol. I. § 61. . . . "Afterwards they, are brought by us to a place where there is water: and after the same manner of regeneration that we were regenerated by, are they also regenerated: for they then receive a washing in water in the name of the Father of all things, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit." Luther says: "And hence has Baptism such virtue and energy (as the Holy Ghost witnesseth by St. Paul) that it is the laver of Regeneration, and of the renewal of the Holy Ghost: by which laver

the impure and sentenced nature which we draw from Adam is *altered and amended*;" and Calvin, also, "By Baptism we were *initiated . . .* into the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

With this preparation, and the arrangements made for the development of a new life, the question comes up, "Who are the proper recipients of that Sacrament which our Lord has ordained as the means of engrafting men into His Body?" to which our author answers, "All those who partake of the nature of the first Adam." All who partake of the condemnation of the first Adam, have a right to the grace offered in the Second. But not all are fitted to enter, and yet all, without exception, are in original sin. Only infants, and those that repent and believe, and *are baptized*. At the first adults were baptized, because then the very name of Christ was unknown, but this was an unusual state or condition of things. "But this surely was not to be the *normal* state of things." "I believe, then, that the New Testament was written, not for the age of the Church in which the Gospel was preached to unbelievers, but for those many successive ages that have succeeded it, in which the children of the Church have been taught more or less of its truths from the earliest dawn of their consciousness. When, then, the New Testament mentions frequently the Baptism of adults, it does precisely what any other missionary record would do." In the Acts of the Apostles, the record of the missionary labors of the servants of God, we have the notice of baptism in the case of those who were led by the Sermon of Peter to ask, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The answer comes, "Repent: and be baptized every one of you . . . for the promise is to you, and to your children." "They were to be baptized *BECAUSE of the promise*; but the promise belonged to *their children*, as well as to them, consequently Baptism, the seal of the promise, would equally belong to their children; at least, they, being brought up in a religion, the first principle of which was that children should be admitted into a covenant of promise on their eighth day, would assuredly understand it so, if not expressly forbidden." The Sun, in whom all centred, had arisen, "The Word

was made flesh," and in Christ we find the interpretation and completion of all preceding worship and divine acts. But, as before said, the promise was not only to them, *but also to their children*, and they were admitted into peculiar relations to God, by circumcision, God's own appointment. As infants were not disqualified under the Old Testament dispensation, but had to enter solemn relations on their eighth day, on pain of being cut off, neither are they disqualified in this new dispensation; it is rather *the* qualification for these covenant blessings. "But in the Old Covenant it was a fundamental principle to admit children to its blessings, and a rite was ordained for the purpose. This rite was superseded by another, as the form of entrance into the grace of the New Covenant. . . . We should certainly have been told, for instance, that in the three households, of the baptism of which we have a record, there were no children, or that the children in them had their Baptism deferred. . . . If Infant Baptism is practiced at all, it must, of necessity, soon supersede, in a Christian community, the practice of Adult Baptism. If, then, it were contrary to the will of the Divine Founder that infants should be baptized, we should certainly have been warned against it. . . . We should have expected some such rule as this: "Let not a child be baptized till he is of such an age: till he has had such and such instruction: till he has shown that he has profited under it by the genuine signs of Conversion." "If, then, the baptism of infants be contrary to Christ's will, the omission of all warning against so universal a custom—a custom that so rapidly and so naturally superseded Adult Baptism—is inconceivable." If children are fit subjects for baptism—if it is to be for them a bar to original sin—then baptism must be for them what Christ ordained it, viz: "The communication of Himself as the Second Adam." It is sad to admit that this ancient faith has been undermined, and has given way to a great extent, so that now there is doubt whether, after all, by baptism, infants are ingrafted into Christ, and whether He communicates Himself, as the Second Adam, in this Holy transaction. The very fact that our children are baptized—are covenanted with God—grafted into the Second

Adam, is the source of the greatest comfort to the Christian heart when bereft of them. "They *were suffered* to come to Christ," and in this holy transaction He laid His hand on them and blessed them. What becomes of the unbaptized, not ingrafted child, dying in infancy, it is not for us to say.* So our author says: "They are made partakers of his deadly nature in a state of perfect unconsciousness. When they can do no sin—for they are in the mere germ of existence—they are made partakers of Adam's nature of sin and death. If, then, God has provided a Second Adam (which, blessed be His holy name, He has done,) why should not infants in a like state of helplessness receive in Baptism His nature, in order to counteract that evil, and renew the nature they have helplessly and unavoidably received from the first Adam?" "Regeneration," as has been well said, "is the correlative and opposite to original sin. As original sin is the transmission of a quality of evil, so regeneration is the infusion of a quality of good: as original sin is inherited without the personal act of us who are born of the flesh, so regeneration is bestowed without the personal merit in us who are born of the Spirit: as in the inheritance of original sin we are passive, and unconscious, so in regeneration, when we are baptized as infants, we as passively and unconsciously receive a new nature." Can unconsciousness, then, be made a bar to the reception of the nature of the Second Adam, seeing it is not to the reception of the nature of the first Adam? Taking this view of the case, baptism is indispensable—conveys grace, and the denial of it is one of the most fearful heresies inflicted on Christianity, leaving out, on the wild commons of the world, the infant child, having inherited a depraved nature, and refusing to it to be ingrafted into a new stock in order to partake of a new life. It brings the baptized child into new relations to God and to Christ, even as the circumcised among the Jews were brought into relations to God different from those of the

* It is known to many that a belief prevailed in the church formerly (and perhaps now) that the unbaptized child, dying in infancy, can never become completely happy, or, in other words, can never see the "Beatific Vision."

uncircumcised. On this plane we can see the infused poison, in the rationalism of our day, cropping out, gradually preparing the way for bolder conquests.

That this is no imaginary state—that the relation of the Baptized is what the Sacrament says it is, in other words “that grace is not only offered, but *really exhibited and conferred* by the Holy Ghost,”* is clear from the Word of God. God, in His Holy Word, addressing his children through his servants, proceeds upon this fact, as may be seen from every page. The circumcised people, as well as the baptized member, is always addressed as having received grace,—is addressed as being in a relation different from the individual of the world. Take the following: “Israel is my son, even my first-born.” Ex. iv. 22. “Ye are the children of the Lord your God.” Deut. xiv. 1. “And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred *them*, because of the provoking of his sons and of his daughters.” Deut. xxxii. 19. “I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.” Isa. i. 2. And so throughout the whole Old Testament Scriptures, His people are addressed as “His children,” “His people,” “His chosen,” “His Bride,” etc. etc. And now, *because* they had bestowed upon them such distinguished privileges and favors—because they had been admitted into these peculiar relations, and in these sinned, and did wickedly, and their sins were great, the need of repentance, on the other hand, was so very pressing and so urgent, as we have it from the mouths of the holy prophets. But how were they brought into these relations? How were they brought to share in the privileges God had ordained for them? Decidedly, by Circumcision. Gen. xvii. 9–13. And by this divinely ordained rite, children of Jewish parents entered into covenant relations with God, bringing them under the most solemn obligations to love, obey, and serve God. And this continued in force until this economy was ended by being taken up into a new and higher order when the “Word was made flesh.”

*..... the grace promised is *not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred* by the Holy Ghost, &c. Confession of Faith—Art. 28. Baptism. Presbyterian Church.

"The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." The second Adam is here. The source or fountain of a new order of life is opened, to which we are to come for life, and to whom we are to be supernaturally joined by a union so close "that it could only be illustrated by the union that subsists betwixt a human body composed of various limbs and its head, and a vine and the branches that branch out from it." This kingdom is peculiar, and He who is the Head of it gives us intimations of the real state of it. Take the parable of the tares, Mat. xiii. 24, 25. Then the parable of the draw-net, Mat. xiii. 47 *et seq.*, and also John xv. 1-6; besides many others. And does not this give us an insight into this kingdom? Who can read the Apostolic epistles and believe, though addressed to the "Saints and Faithful," that there was no admixture of evil with good? Indeed Church History gives a history of one continued warfare between evil and good, which seems to repeat itself, even now, in the contests between rationalism and the truth. And yet what advantages have been offered, when it is borne in mind that these "Saints and Faithful" were in a state of grace.

It is clear from the Word of God that two classes are recognized, the one in Grace, the other not. It will assist us greatly in reading the Word of God, to observe this distinction. To this point the author now addresses himself. The apostle addresses his readers and hearers "as in a real state of grace, as all partakers of the Holy Spirit, and baptized *by Him* into Christ's body—not into a mere outward society, but into His *mystical body*." In all his epistles he gives us to understand that great grace is offered, and that this is always conditioned. What is not to be forgotten is that it is really offered—really at hand. In the Epistle to the Corinthians, he addresses it to the "Church of God which is at Corinth," the "Sanctified in Christ Jesus," the "called to be saints." Here we cannot specify, for want of room, but would say that the whole Epistle is framed on this ground, "Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus. Ye are God's husbandry," etc., etc. Take this then as a fact, being in grace, and there is to be deduced a theory far different from our common, and as some would say, "Evangelical Pro-

testantism," which deserves to be sincerely pondered and prayerfully laid to heart. The following inferences are made: "First, you observe that St. Paul's mode of addressing nominal Christians exactly answers to the way in which the prophets treated nominal Jews. In both the one case and the other the real communication of the privilege of the respective covenants, was insisted on, to convince those under the covenants of their greater sin in not living up to the covenant blessings and obligations. The covenant blessing of which the Corinthian Christians had been made partakers, *viz:* grafting into Christ's body in Baptism, was an infinitely greater spiritual blessing than that received by the Jewish child at his circumcision; and yet, in one important respect, they answered to one another. They laid the recipient, in each case, under obligations of which he could never divest himself, and yet which he might receive to his greater condemnation. Then observe, what was St. Paul's fear respecting his converts. It was not lest any should deem themselves to be members of Christ when they were *not*, but lest those who had been *all* made members of Christ should fail to realize it. He casts not the shadow of a doubt on the reality of their engrafting into Christ; on the contrary, he holds all responsible for grace, because all had been engrafted. . . . We find no expression of doubt or hesitation respecting the Corinthians having all received grace. 'Know ye not that your bodies? etc.' 'Ye are the body of Christ, etc.' . . . You will observe, also, how impossible it is to suppose that the apostle addressed his converts on some unreal hypothesis, or imaginary charitable assumption, that they were members of Christ, when in reality they were not; for he intimates in all the expressions that the sin of the Corinthians was immeasurably enhanced by the fact of their actually being members of Christ." pp. 67-68. Then we have an examination into the teaching of the Epistles to the Romans and Colossians, and here we find the same way of proceeding. "In both these Epistles the grace of union with the Second Adam is presented to us as a co-burial and co-resurrection with Christ. We are united to Him not only as an Adam, but as a

crucified and risen Adam. In partaking of Him, we partake both of His death and resurrection; so that the same Baptism which grafts us into Him, is the means by and in which we are co-buried and co-raised with Him." This is seen throughout the whole of the Epistle to the Romans. From this is deduced, "First, that the Apostle contemplates the Baptism of all the Roman Christians, without exception, to be a union with Christ, a grafting into Him as the Second Adam, a co-burial with Him in His burial, and a rising again with Him in His resurrection. He uses the most *inclusive* term, "So many of us," and he appeals to it as an indisputable truth. "*Know ye not*, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?" "Observe, also, that the words of the Apostle here, exactly answer to his mode of speaking to the Corinthians, and have the same practical force." It is not an idle thought to be grafted into Christ; and it is no light matter to let the baptized understand, that there are no baptismal obligations under which they are, and to intimate that no grace has been conferred, and so ignore it. Rather should the fact of grace offered and conferred in baptism, be pressed home upon the conscience and the heart, as the Apostle always does to his hearers and tells them, that because they are *in grace*, because their baptism *has meaning*, because they are engrafted into Christ and thus have great advantages offered, *therefore* "they are to walk in newness of life." The same mode we find in the Epistle to the Colossians, addressed to the "Saints and faithful brethren in Christ." Here again the address is general, and then, in the second chapter, the apostle exhorts these very "saints and brethren in Christ," to constancy, and he challenges them to walk in newness of life, *because* there has been for them a baptism, burial, and resurrection. Col. ii. 12. Indeed, only on the ground of their union with the Second Adam—their engrafting into him by baptism, can you understand the precepts addressed to them. So in the third chapter, children, husbands, wives, servants are addressed, and all, as in a state of grace, and in the case of children, it follows that they, as well as their parents, had been buried with Christ in their baptism.

We have been, so far, free in making extracts from this interesting book, to show the drift of the author's arguments, and we may say, that the same result is reached in the case of the other epistles. There is no singling out, but his address is general, "to the saints and brethren in Christ," Ep. to Gal., iii. 26, etc., the peculiar grace bestowed in baptism is brought forward again, as the incentive to holiness. Any one reading these Epistles, cannot help but see, that by baptism these persons addressed had been brought into a state, in which before baptism they had not been; or, in other words, they teach Baptismal Regeneration, in the sense in which regeneration has been explained, or an ingrafting into Christ, as clearly as they teach and assert the love of God as manifested in Christ Jesus our Lord. Whether the doctrine is horrible or not, there it is, and it requires a perverted mind to read it out these Epistles. "It cannot be alleged that St. Paul had no opportunities of introducing the doctrine of partial grace, or particular election, to the churches which he addressed. Many of them had admitted gross errors into their practice; others, as the Galatians, had swerved widely from sound doctrine; many individuals were "unruly and vain talkers, and deceivers, who subverted whole houses, teaching things that they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." *These corruptions, however, are nowhere attributed to the denial of grace, but always to the abuse or neglect of it.* The Apostle calls the heathen nations "children of wrath, and sinners of the Gentiles," so, equally clear, he intimates that the Christians he addresses were thus regenerate; as having "put off the old man with its deeds," and having become the "temple of the Holy Ghost," and the "members of Christ," as having the spiritual circumcision, and being "buried with Christ in baptism," and as being "washed, sanctified and justified in the name of our Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." To the Galatians, "bewitched" as he says they were, "that they should not obey the truth," he still writes, "Ye are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." These addresses and exhortations are

founded on the principle that the disciples, by their dedication to God in baptism, had been brought into a state of reconciliation with Him, had been admitted to privileges, which the Apostle calls on them to improve. On the authority of this example, and of the undeniable practice of the first ages of Christianity, baptism has been held as conveying regeneration, instructing us to pray, before baptism, "that the infant may be born again, and made an heir of everlasting salvation; and to return thanks, after baptism, that it hath pleased God to regenerate the infant by His Holy Spirit, and to receive him for His own child by adoption." This theory, we know, is different from the prevailing theory in our day, and what assumes to itself the name of "Evangelical Christianity," in which theory, the initial sacrament is ignored, and studiously keeps all on the outside, who have not been experimentally converted to God. Indeed, in that scheme, which lifts children, uncovenanted, to heaven, and becomes horrified when hearing of a *limbus infantum*, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, can find no foothold. It shudders at the appellation of "saint and believer," to one, in whose case the apostle stood in doubt, and yet, this is precisely what is done once and again by the same apostle, in the N. T. Epistles. As in the O. T. appellations were used when addressing the whole multitude, so in the N. T. we have the same mode of address in the case of those who were baptized. The address is not made to those who passed through the unmeaning and unscriptural process of conversion, at some newly invented anxious-seat, where there is a total ignoring of all grace, a studious shutting it out from the mind, but it is made to those baptized, and so brought into grace, as a ground or basis upon which their lives are to be governed and controlled. It means to say, to every baptized member, that in some "real sense, baptism separated each man to God's service, and that, if such an one failed to live up to his profession, he was so far a living lie." This modern theory is unknown to the N. T. It is something new. It cannot frame the lip to speak, in a general way, of Christians as "saints, or holy," and yet the apostle does so repeatedly. "You will observe, that

St. Paul constantly uses these appellations, not as implying that his hearers *had* attained superior Christian excellence, but as suggesting a *motive* for their exerting themselves to attain it. He never tells any of them to expect any '*call*,' but addresses them all as '*called saints*,' and exhorts them to '*walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called*.' He never speaks of them *becoming* elect, but exhorts them, *as* the elect of God, holy (or saints) to put on mercy, kindness, and humbleness, and to give diligence to make their calling and election sure. Never does he exhort them to be saints, but to walk as *becometh* saints, never to *enter into any brotherhood*, but to '*love as*' brethren. The titles, in short, which he applies, all denote their *privileges* and their *duties*, not their good *use* of those privileges, and faithful *performance* of those duties." *Whateley*. Ignore these distinctions, allow the engrafted person to remain under the delusion that there has been no grace conferred, bring him to think only of his conversion at some far off time, at the anxious-seat, and he will feel himself absolved from the Christian covenant, as completely as the untaught heathen. Who does not feel that here we have two theories, one, the scriptural, emphatically affirming grace conferred in baptism,—or an engrafting into Christ by it; and the other denying it, and expecting the regeneration and conversion to be effected during some special excitement, gotten up for the purpose? Does it not bring in a new Gospel, a new theory of Redemption, unknown to the apostle's mind? This latter view holds all unconverted persons alike—that there is no special responsibility imposed on them—that they are as the heathen are, with only this difference, that they have been born in a Christian land, when in fact, because of their baptism, their relation is far different. Is it not true, and who will deny, that a grave responsibility rests upon the teacher of the Word of God—that the ignoring of this grace has much to do with the sad state of affairs every where prevalent, when the young, though baptized, are unwilling to own and acknowledge God by a profession of faith in Christ? "If men are habitually taught that they never begin to be in any sense '*God's people*,' or '*holy*,' till they are con-

verted, when they are grown to maturity; and when, along with this, they are reminded that they can do nothing to forward this conversion, so entirely is it the work of God; of course under such teaching they hold themselves to be as completely out of the pale, and absolved from the obligations of the Christian covenant as the heathen." And is not this the complexion, the character of the larger percentage of preaching as we now have it in the Protestant Church? Listen to this, and then turn to the addresses and exhortations of the Apostle, as found in his epistles, and you are made to feel that there are two worlds—two orders of thought, in which the speakers move. The Apostle does not know of the modern distinctions of our day, the select few, and of the others still needing regeneration and conversion, as modern revival preachers lustily cry, but he speaks of the great body of the baptized as brought into a peculiar grace, and therefore exhorts them, because of it, to be careful to see to it that they fall not away, but to walk in newness of life, to make their calling and election sure.

But these peculiarities are not confined alone to the Epistles already quoted. The Epistle to the Ephesians is full of the same teaching—the assertion of grace bestowed upon the "Saints and faithful," at Ephesus. The same also is true of the Parables of our Lord, as well as of the remaining Epistles. Carefully examine them. And now, what is the inference from all these facts? Evidently this, that what held in that day in the Church of Christ, must hold in our day—that if the baptized member was by baptism brought into grace, or in other words, grafted into Christ, so must the baptized member be in our day—that if it was fearful to possess such grace and abuse it, so it is now,—that if by it the baptized member was laid under the most solemn obligation to obey and love God, so the baptized member is now. That these persons addressed as "Saints and faithful," were so in the modern sense, cannot be made out, and no one, with an earnest mind, can read the Word of God so. Take the idea of regeneration and conversion, as held in our day, as meaning the truly godly Christian, and in that

light read such passages as Eph. iv. 25, *et seq.*; Col. iii. 18; Heb. xii. 16; 1 Pet. iv. 15. It all "proceeds on the assumption that **all** to whom they are addressed, have been received, by a past act of God's **mercy**, into a state of grace and a holy fellowship, which may yet be **uncared** for and unrealized, and so eventually lost. All are brethren, all **are** partakers of a calling and election, which they all must give diligence to **make sure**." It is not to a select few, but the responsibility rests on the whole body of Christians, as is clear. "The precepts and warnings contained in them (the Epistles) can be applied in their entirety to Christians of this our day, only on the principle of Baptismal Regeneration, as held by the Catholic Church; for on this principle, and on this alone, can the mass of nominal Christians be held answerable for having received grace." And, indeed, this principle of the universal diffusion of grace, and the consequent responsibility of the whole body of Christians, is not only implied, but asserted over and over again. So Rom. xii. 3; 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vii. 7; xii. 7; xiii. 27; 2 Cor. vi. 1; Gal. iii. 26-28, etc., etc., etc. In all this is implied that baptism is of force—that it confers grace, as is held in all Protestant Confessions—and that because, by baptism, grafted into Christ, the responsibility is so great and the challenge so earnest, that each one is called upon "to make his calling and election sure." It means too, to affirm that the Church is more than a mere idea—that she is truly the Body of Christ—an order of grace let down from heaven, comprehending forces and powers which are not of the world—that here, and not beyond her (as the Presbyterian Confession teaches) salvation is found, and that by nature (without any exception made in favor of children of believing parents) we "are all the children of wrath," and that, in the wisdom of God, He instituted for the Jew circumcision, by which the circumcised entered into fellowship with a grace God had prepared, and in the New Testament economy, by baptism grafted into Christ—made a partaker in the life of the Second Adam, and consequently is called into a relation of holiness, and is bound to obedience, faith and love. "But it is not enough thus to be in Christ, but we must abide

in Him. "If ye abide in me," saith He, *implying that some may be in Him, and yet not abide in Him.* Such are they who once were baptized, and so made members of His body, but are afterwards cut off by His Church, or by themselves: such as renounce their Baptism, or leave off to profess His doctrine and religion: and such as only profess it, but do not take care to believe and live according to it."—BEVERIDGE.

In the way of objection, by those who ignore grace in the Sacrament of Baptism, and are alarmed at the very words of Baptismal Regeneration, it is triumphantly asked, is it not written, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new?" How can he be a new creature, if he has never been converted? "The answer to this is, of course, that a man must not only be grafted into Christ, but must *abide* in Him." "We have the whole doctrine of grafting into Christ, and union with Him, and its results, in our Lord's similitude of the Vine and its Branches; and in that similitude He recognizes the awful truth that a man may have been brought unto Him, and yet be barren of the fruits of holiness and goodness here, and be finally lost hereafter." (John xv.). Then the case of Simon Magus is reconciled, and it is added, concerning the unworthy reception of Baptism by an adult, "I cannot see any difficulty in it which is not satisfactorily cleared up by the Scripture analogy of the graft." (Rom. xi. 17-24). Baptism, *no matter what the state of heart of the recipient*, at once brings the baptized into contact (if I may use the expression) with the highest powers of the unseen world. In some infinitely mysterious way, the human graft there and then comes into contact with the new stock of humanity—the Second Adam. If there be faith in the person baptized, he, at once, begins to partake of the root and fatness of the Divine olive-tree, which, if *he yields his will to it*, subdues to itself the whole inner man (1 Jno. iii. 6-9). If he has not faith, the saving efficacy of the grace of Christ enters not into him; *nevertheless he is, all the same, brought into contact with the True Vine*, BUT TO HIS CONDEMNATION. . . . If baptism is, no matter what the circumstances, to be adminis-

tered *only once*, it must do its work, and do it *once for all*. And that work can only be the bringing a man, either to his present salvation or to his utter condemnation, into the one family, the gathering him into the one fold, the grafting him into the one stock, the joining him to the one mystical body."

We are aware that baptism has been repeatedly held forth as only a sign, and that it is a beautiful badge of our profession, leaving the whole subject indefinite and indistinct, an avowal of our sincerity, when the truth is, that there is not a single place that can be named, where it is not connected with spiritual grace bestowed in it, and this spirit will say with Faustus Socinus: "Nothing else can be meant, by the washing away of sins by Baptismal water, than that it is declared by the baptism, that the man's sins are already done away, and so this is, as it were, *publicly sealed*." "Regeneration is the implanted *germ* of a new nature, the infusion of a new leaven, a union with Christ, which may be the smallest thing possible—as small in the eye of man, as a grain of mustard seed, in its beginnings, but then it is calculated and intended to subdue the whole inner man." From all this may be seen "the coincidence of Scripture with this view of Sacramental union with Him, and the exalted position the Saviour has, in Infinite Wisdom, assigned to the Sacrament of Baptism, as the means of making men partakers of His nature."

But then, too, it is said that this view of grace, conferred in baptism, is directly opposed to the doctrine of election and Justification by Faith. This does not of necessity follow. The Scriptures unquestionably teach an election, but then it is asked, "Does He so elect men to His benefits, whatever these are, that they *must* necessarily respond to His election? He certainly did not so elect the Jews: for He elected them to blessings to which they in no respect responded." In the Epistle to the Romans, chaps. 8-11, we have the doctrine of election, if any where in Scripture, and yet these chapters dare not be so isolated from the preceding, and especially from the 6th, where we "have the most decided assertion possible that all the baptized" are buried with Christ by baptism into death;

that like as He (Christ) was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also (*i. e.*, all the baptized) should walk in newness of life." "Again, all the Roman Christians are, without exception, bid to reckon themselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord:" and for this practical end, "Let not sin, *therefore*, reign in your mortal body," etc. This makes all the baptized answerable for Grace. This view was held by rigid Calvinists, as Bradford, and Calvin himself. *Institutes IV. Chap. 16.*

Once more, it is said, that by this theory no room is left for preaching conversion. "It is presumed that the careless and worldly will rest satisfied with their Baptismal engrafting; and make it 'a screen to hide from themselves the necessity of the complete actual change of mind and disposition necessary to them.'" "If such do so, we can only say that they do it in wilful ignorance of the doctrine, and in wilful despite of the grace and intent of Holy Baptism; for what is the doctrine and grace of it?" "We are buried with Christ by Baptism into death, that . . . we *should* walk in newness of life." In no single passage can the doctrine be construed thus. Everywhere it is a motive—an incentive—it tells us that God has an interest in us—that He gave us (baptized) great grace, that so we may walk in newness of life. No one can deceive himself by supposing baptism to be a passport into heaven. It cannot be. "*I never yet met with one such case. The proportion of professing Christians under such a delusion is, I am certain, perfectly inappreciable.*" "But though I have never met with a case of a person who thus abused the doctrine of baptism, I have met with multitudes—and those, I am afraid, but the index of a still larger number,—who abused the opposite doctrine, to the destruction of their souls. I have met with multitudes who have allowed themselves to remain in a state of impenitence, on the plea that they never had had sufficient grace, if any at all, given to them; that conversion was entirely the work of God, and that they themselves could do nothing to forward it, and that they must wait His time. I say that this is, or soon will be, the master-delusion among the unconverted poor. Often it

is said, 'When God wants me, He will call me.' Of course, all idea of the holiness of the human body, is out of the question." Prophetic words from the lips of this Servant of God! "'Baptismal Regeneration' and 'Conversion' are the natural complements to one another in the scheme of Divine grace." "If conversion be preached to Christian congregations, as if they were so many heathen,—if all grace of Baptism is ignored, and the grace attached to it be pronounced real only in the case of those who afterwards profit by some change, not in the least connected with baptism—then, Satan, seeing the way thus cleared for him, will insinuate (as he does in the ears of hundreds of thousands, who hear what is called the Gospel preached,) that God does not really wish for their holiness; they are as the heathen, why should they not enjoy themselves as the heathen?" Wesley, instrumental in reviving the doctrine of Conversion, says: "By Baptism we are admitted into the Church, and, consequently, made members of Christ its Head. The Jews were admitted into the Church by circumcision, so are the Christians by Baptism." "By Baptism, we, who were by nature children of wrath, are made children of God. And this regeneration, is more than barely being admitted into the Church, though commonly connected therewith: being grafted into the body of Christ's Church, we are made the children of God by adoption and grace." Simeon, quoting Acts i. 38, and 2 Peter i. 9, then asks, "Does not this very strongly countenance the idea which our Reformers entertained, that the remission of our sins, and the regeneration of our souls, are attendant on the baptismal rite?"

There is something practical flowing from this whole subject. Let it be remembered that Regeneration in Baptism is only the seed, not its growth, or development. To the growth or perfection of the plant many other things must contribute. The Providence of God, "must, ordinarily speaking, bring to bear upon the recipient of His grace many things,—such as the care of pious parents, or spiritual pastors: and there must be that divine pruning, or purging, often by sicknesses or calamities, by the distresses attending a hard lot in this world, or by persecution for righteousness' sake, borne meekly and forgivingly after

Christ's example." Besides these, the abundant means which God, in His Providence, bestows to call out the hidden powers of this implanted seed, and to carry it on, in this life, to ripe fruit in the world everlasting. Let it be borne in mind by the deniers that grace is conferred, that it is one thing to have such a benefit bestowed, and quite another thing to hold and realize the doctrinal truth that Baptism is the channel to this grace. And now, practically, to every baptized member, the first and most important result of believing sincerely what God has revealed respecting this sacrament, will be to realize, to every baptized man, that all the precepts of Scripture are *addressed to him*: and if he has turned, or is turning to God, through Christ, that all promises of Scripture *belong to him*. "From the beginning to the end of the Bible, it is taken for granted that those to whom it is addressed are, by an *initial rite, in covenant relationship* with God, and in a *state of grace*: and that those who are thus addressed are not to doubt this, or to wait for something further, but at once to begin in earnest, or to continue in earnest, the working out of their salvation." Then, again, "The Bible is not addressed to, nor intended for, the heathen. The first part of it was inspired for the circumcised Jew: the whole for the baptized Christian. In both cases, God first gathers out a family, and then He gives to this family His word to be their guide." This, again, is something so different from what we find to be the belief and practice of large societies, when it is attempted only to place the Word into the hands of the people, and to scatter it among the heathen as "forest leaves," and that it will be light to them in darkness. Melancthon says: "The principal meaning and end of Baptism we gather from the promise, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;' for Baptism is rightly called a sacrament, because it is annexed to this promise in order to testify that the promise of grace belongs, in very deed, to the man who is baptized. . . . and so, after the man baptized understands (Christian) teaching, let him exercise this faith, let him believe that he is in very deed accepted by God for Christ's sake, and is being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." Let it be felt and laid to heart, that, as baptized, God speaks to his soul in His Word,

entreating him to remember, "that his body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. . . . that he is not his own. . . . and, *therefore*, he is to glorify God in body and in spirit, which are God's.' Properly laid to heart, it will be a powerful motive to lead a holy life, and diligently to engage "in making His calling and election sure."

Such is the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration as unfolded in this volume. Fortified as it is on every side by Scripture, it challenges the earnest and prayerful attention of ministers and laymen. It is not the horrible effusion of an over-heated brain, worthy of being branded "High Church Puseyism," or crying "Romanism," "Romanizing tendency," but a precious Protestant truth, the ingrafting into Christ, for spiritual life, confessed by Christians in all ages, when devoutly affirming "one baptism for the remission of sin," taught by Confessors and Martyrs, Saints and Apostles. It comes as the touch-stone, to test our confidence and our faith in ancient doctrines—it brings out what is held concerning original sin—it reveals in what light we regard the Holy Sacrament of Baptism. All this may be mysterious—it may seem singular that God should attach so much to this rite, and, as the sceptical mind ever says, "I cannot understand this;" and because it cannot see how God can bestow grace, in the case of the baptized infant, therefore it is rejected, and the infant is left out in the uncovenanted wilds of the world to fight its way as it best can. No. Let our Reformed Zion be true to the teaching of her venerable catechism, and faithful to her doctrine as embodied in the venerable Palatinate Liturgy, believed by our pious ancestry before us, in what they regarded as the *Tauf gnade*—reiterated in our Reformed Liturgy now before the Church; and she, continuing faithful in this Reformed-Scriptural doctrine, will be clothed for the contest, which will, assuredly, overtake Protestantism. If God be for us, who may be against us? In the language of the author, "In such a dispensation of grace, it is not for you to ask, 'How can these things be?' Far other words befit a creature redeemed by God Incarnate. Say you rather, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life.' 'Lord, I believe, help Thou my unbelief.'"

ART. V.—PRESBYTERIAN UNION CONVENTION.

BY J. W. NEVIN, D.D.

PART FIRST.

No one, who has come to feel any interest in the *Church Question*, can regard with indifference the movements which are made in favor of union among the different Presbyterian bodies of the country at this time. Whatever may come of them in the end, they form a significant protest against the general wrong of our sectarian Christianity, and show a wholesome uneasiness under the sense of it, which may be taken as a tendency at least in the direction of what is needed to bring the evil to an end. The negotiations which are in progress for uniting again the Old and New School Presbyterians, are in this view of much consequence and account for our American Protestantism generally; but still more worthy of fixed attention, we may say, is the movement brought into view lately for the promotion of unity among all parts and branches of the great Presbyterian communion in the United States, through an overture made for the purpose by the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian (Covenanter) Church at its meeting in May last. That the overture should have proceeded from this body in particular, the smallest of any consequence, and, in common estimation, the most stiff of all in its opinions, was of itself remarkable; but that only serves to make more wonderful the responsive echo it has met with from other quarters, as we find full expression given to it in the memorable Union Meeting, which was held a short time since in Dr. Wylie's (First Reformed Presbyterian) Church, Philadelphia. We cannot do better here, perhaps, than to introduce the meeting to the attention of our readers

through the following notice of it by the "New York Observer" the week after it took place.

"One of the most remarkable religious assemblies ever convened in this country was held in Philadelphia last week. It was remarkable, not so much in the object and circumstances of its gathering, as in its pentecostal character, the manifestly overshadowing and pervading influences of the Holy Spirit, and the unanimity to which those who composed it—men of greatly diversified views and feelings—were brought by its deliberations, and by united prayer. We have never before witnessed any general convocation of the officers of the Church upon which a spirit of grace and of supplication was so manifestly poured out, or in which, in answer to prayer, more important results were reached. We cannot but hope that it will exert a great influence in bringing together several portions of the divided Church of Christ.

"The steps which have been taken to effect a reunion of the Old and New School branches of the Presbyterian Church are well known to our readers. The almost entire unanimity in regard to the terms of union to which the two large Committees of the General Assemblies were brought, in their deliberations in this city in April last, was very unexpected, and it greatly encouraged the friends of the measure to hope that the union would soon be consummated. This hope has, during the last few months, been in a measure repressed by the opposition which has sprung up in both branches of the Church, more especially in the Old School, since the meetings of the Assemblies in May; and, although the meeting of the Convention now just held in Philadelphia was anticipated with much interest, it was awaited with no little fear that there would be such a development of opposition from the various branches of the Presbyterian family as to postpone indefinitely the desired union. This led the friends of the measure in all parts of the land to make it the subject of special prayer, and when the delegation to the Convention came together, it was soon manifest that the Spirit of God, which is the spirit of concord, was present."

"The Convention assembled at 11 o'clock on Wednesday,

Nov. 6th. Geo. H. Stuart, Esq., was appointed Temporary Chairman, and was afterward, by acclamation, chosen Permanent Presiding Officer. On taking the chair he called upon the Rev. Mr. Blair, of Pennsylvania, the oldest member of the Convention, and eighty years of age, to lead in prayer. Mr. Stuart then read the 4th chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians:

‘I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all, &c.’

He gave out the 100th Psalm, Scotch version:

‘All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice, &c.’;

and addressed the Convention, sounding the key-note to its subsequent character in an address of rare and elevated Christian eloquence. He welcomed the members to this mount of privilege, and to the homes and hearts of the people of the city of Brotherly Love. He spoke of the aims and objects of the gathering as those of peace, of fraternal love. They had not come to promote any selfish or sectarian objects, but to endeavor to unite the scattered members of the Presbyterian family in one, that together they might wage a successful war against the powers of darkness. He referred, in words which melted all hearts, to the union which prevailed among those engaged in the service of the Christian Commission during our late national struggle, when, as they ministered to the dying, and to those who were in perishing need of a Saviour, no one could tell whether his companion was a Presbyterian or an Episcopalian, a Baptist or a Methodist. This was the spirit which should animate the ministers and elders of the various Presbyterian Churches. There was nothing that should hinder them from standing side by side in meeting the enemies of our common Christianity, and in laboring to bring the world to Christ. He

said in conclusion: A voice comes to us to-day from the graves of Thomas Brainerd and John M. Krebs, the Chairmen of the Committees on Union of the Old School and New School Assemblies. If we could but hear their voices, we would be greatly encouraged in this good work. My own words in its behalf are poor and feeble when compared with the words of the Apostle:

‘That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.’”

After the regular organization of the Convention, it was found to be composed of 180 delegates from the Old School body, 78 from the New School, 26 from the United Presbyterian, 27 from the Reformed, 5 from the Cumberland, and 4 from the Reformed Dutch; *three hundred and thirteen* in all; a most respectable assembly, certainly, as regards numbers, which appears to have been no less respectable, also, in the general character of its members.

“In the afternoon of Wednesday was heard the only discordant note that was struck during all the sessions of the Convention. One of the oldest members, who had been prominent in carrying out the measures which effected the division of the Presbyterian Church in 1837, and who had come to this Convention with the evident purpose to oppose all measures for healing that division, began a course of remark personal and offensive to some of the most esteemed members on the floor of the house. When called to order by the President for his personal reflections, he assumed the attitude of a pugilist, and defied all present, saying that he was responsible for what he said, and that if any one did not like it he would know where to find him. Every one in the house was deeply saddened by the occurrence of such a scene, and for a time it seemed as if the harmony of the meeting was hopelessly broken; and, occurring at the very opening of the business, it was regarded as almost

ominous of a thwarting of the object of the assemblage. But the impression soon passed away—the same voice was not heard again in the Convention, and, until the close, not another note of discord disturbed its harmony.”

The voice, which fell thus inharmoniously on the opening spirit of the meeting, as we learn from the regular report of its proceedings, was that of the venerable Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge, famous alike in the political world, and in the ecclesiastical. The spirit of the meeting, however, soon recovered itself from the rude shock to which it was thus exposed, and only went forward the more triumphantly afterward, as it might seem, in its own direction, gathering strength, indeed, to go beyond all that was originally proposed in the movement. For, whereas the original overture of the Covenanter Synod appeared to contemplate simply a meeting for prayer and conference, with the view of promoting Christian fellowship and harmonious action between the several bodies that should join in it, hardly had the Convention got properly to work before it became apparent that no such idea of mere federal unity could satisfy its earnest aspirations. It must address itself at once to the task of preparing the way for an organic union. It was, indeed, a proposition to this effect, which had drawn out Dr. Breckinridge's jarring speech. No sooner was that offence got fairly out of the way, therefore, than the whole interest of the Convention was found concentrating itself more and more on the question of union in full form; and a committee was appointed, accordingly, to “prepare and report a basis for the organic union of the Presbyterian Churches.”

“The evening was spent in a free expression of the views of the members on the desirableness of union, and as to what the basis should be. It was universally acknowledged, that there must be a spirit of concession in order to secure the important end, and the conference indicated that the subject of Psalmody would prove the most difficult point, many of the members of the United Presbyterian and Reformed Presbyterian Churches adhering rigidly to the position that nothing should be used in

the praise of God but inspired Psalms, or literal versions of some portions of the inspired Scriptures.

"In the course of this conference the President read a letter which he had just received from Rev. Dr. Guthrie, of Scotland, warmly advocating the union of the Presbyterian Churches, and a similar letter from Rev. Dr. Duff was subsequently announced.

"On Thursday the conference was continued, the divine influence which pervaded the assembly becoming more and more apparent. Frequent pauses were made in the proceedings, at the call of the President, for the Convention to unite in silent prayer, the stillness of the crowded house being such that no one whose eyes were closed could be conscious of the presence of another person; and often during the discussions and other proceedings, the President called upon different members to lead in prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

Much earnest and affecting oratory on the subject of church union took place in this conference, which tended, continually, to swell the tide of emotion, now running all in one and the same direction. To those acquainted at all with his past ecclesiastical history, the remarks of one worthy gentleman in particular, who figured along with Dr. Breckenridge in the rending of the Presbyterian Church thirty years ago, must be felt to carry with them a special interest. "The Rev. Dr. Musgrave," we are told, "who was well-known as prominent on the Old School side at the time of the division, said this was not the first Convention which he had attended, as he was a member of the Convention of 1837. He spoke often, and earnestly and eloquently in favor of a speedy union. He said he believed that the Convention was as competent now to settle this question practically as it will be in five or ten years hence. He could not see why the whole Church cannot be united, as we all profess to believe in the same thing, and agree as to government. If the Committee present us a sound basis for union, such as will secure a united and Permanent Church, I will be in favor of it. I believe we are all prepared for it. [Applause.] The speaker said he had never felt so happy in his life as during the sessions of the Convention. He would thank God if the Committee would bring us a sound basis on

which we could unite. Such would be its moral influence, that all the Churches would be led to adopt it. He was not so sanguine that every individual would believe in such an organic basis of the union. They might stand out together in the cold for a time; but they would soon be glad to come in, and we would be as glad to receive them. We will keep the doors open. [Applause.] If they do stay out, they will do it on their own responsibility."

The report of the Committee on the Basis of Union, was presented on Thursday afternoon, and became then, of course, the proper subject of business for the Convention, during the remainder of its sessions. On the day following, however, there was an interruption of the regular business (a sort of wheel within wheel), which threatened, for a time, in the way of episode, to absorb the interest of the main action in its own superior enthusiasm. This was the memorable feat of fraternization, which was enacted between this Presbyterian Convention, and a certain other Episcopal Convention that happened to be holding its sessions in Philadelphia at the same time; altogether, a most dramatic scene, in which the interest of the whole occasion was wrought to its highest pitch, and all were made to feel that Friday was, of a truth, not only "the last day, but also the great day of the feast."

What led to this, was the friendly advance made from the Presbyterian side on Wednesday evening; when, having learned that "a large body of *Evangelical* clergymen and laymen of the Episcopal Church were in session in the city, deliberating on matters affecting the common interests of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," the Union Meeting adopted, unanimously, the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That this Convention send its cordial salutation to our Episcopal brethren now assembled in Convention in this city, praying that grace, mercy, and peace, may rest upon them from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

A special committee had been appointed to bear the salutation to the Episcopal Convention, which received it so favorably, that, on motion of Mr. Tyng, it was determined to respond

to it personally by another committee; and it was the appearance of this deputation now, in the main aisle of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, with Bishops McIlvaine and Lee at its head, and more than a hundred Episcopal clergymen in its train, which became at once the signal for the grand outburst of brotherly love that followed, exceeding in theatrical effect all that was ever exhibited of the sort, on May platforms or anywhere else, in the history of the country before.

The Convention rose to receive its guests. Then there was prayer, led by the Rev. Dr. Newton, rector of the Church of the Epiphany, Philadelphia. Then the whole congregation, standing, rang out the lines:

Behold how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together such as brethren are
In unity to dwell!

This done, the deputation, having ascended the platform, were formally introduced to the house by the Rev. Dr. H. B. Smith, of New York, Chairman of the Presbyterian committee of salutation; whereupon the President of the Convention, Mr. G. H. Stuart, advancing to Bishop McIlvaine, said: "*Brother—I shall not call you Bishop now, for we are brothers in Christ Jesus. I, on behalf of the Presbyterian Convention, welcome you and your colleagues.*" The Bishop replied, that he was glad to find his old friend, Mr. Stuart, presiding over this august body; and then, stepping to the front of the platform, addressed the Convention as follows:

"Dearly beloved brethren! We reciprocate your prayers on our behalf. Those prayers have been answered, not directly, but more auspiciously than most of us could have anticipated. God has answered them in the spirit of love. The entrance of your deputation was a grateful surprise, and every heart was opened at once. We are here to-day for the purpose of expressing our love and our desires in response. It may seem to you a remarkable indication of Providence when I tell you, that when the Episcopal General Convention was assembled in this city in 1856, the matter of promoting co-operation with other

Churches [in measures for the bringing about a better understanding was brought before the House of Bishops. A committee of five was appointed to take advantage of any opportunity that God in His providence might devise in promoting a nearer union. It is remarkable that I am the only surviving member of that committee. The rest have all gone to the blessed union above. I am rejoiced to think it is reserved for me to stand in this place to discharge the duty which I believe to be of the sort contemplated by the House of Bishops. The right hand of fellowship was extended to us yesterday in prayer, and now in this manner. I greet you in the name of the House of Bishops, and I greet you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. [Applause.] These are times when, instead of there being a desire to magnify our differences, we should aim to bring about such measures as will unite us in the advancement of the Church of Christ. The foundation which the Church builds upon is a sure one, and we stand here to testify to our common standing upon that foundation. Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ. Let us be careful, however, how we build thereon. We live in a most solemn age of the world, and we have serious evils to face; we have to war against infidelity; we have to war against the power which has stood against the Church—a power which at this day has its eyes upon this country and that on the other side of the water. It becomes us, therefore, to unite our endeavors to further every right effort to advance the truth. May God bless us in our endeavors in this great work.

“The President, then taking Bishop Lee by the hand, introduced him to the Convention, saying: The last time that Bishop McIlvaine, Bishop Lee, and I met, we were at the gates of Richmond, asking Jefferson Davis to allow us to enter Richmond and minister to the starving Union soldiers who had been battling for our beloved country. Now that we have one united country, may we not hope that soon we will have one united Church?

“Bishop Lee said the deputation had come to reciprocate the courteous and Christian greeting that had been extended to

their body. He felt, in common with the one who had preceded him, that this interchange of fellowship and Christian love was unprecedented and unexpected. This certainly cannot be attributed to the will or wisdom of man, but to God our Father. As the deputation entered this house the first words that greeted their ears were those uttered in the prayer that was offered, 'Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father: to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.' We come to acknowledge each other as belonging to this royal priesthood. He felt that it was a privilege to be permitted here to speak of the feelings of love which we entertain for all the family of Christ. He expressed his sympathy with the members of this Convention as members of the household of faith, and as engaged in the same great and blessed work, and we all wish that mutual sympathy may prevail among us. We call to remembrance that the truths of the Reformation have been maintained by your communion. We rejoice that you are preparing to stand unitedly against the powers of darkness. In that great day, when we shall be assembled before the throne of God, how insignificant will appear the differences which have here distracted us as members of the Church. He concluded by thanking the Convention for the warm and fraternal reception which had been given to him and his colleagues.

"Prof. Smith then led in reciting the Apostles' Creed—all present repeating—after which the hymn,

'Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love,'

was sung by the entire assembly with deep emotion.

"Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, Jr., and Messrs. Conyngham and Brunot, made brief addresses, when Mr. Stuart replied: Right Reverend Fathers, and dearly beloved brethren, we thank you, in the name of this Convention, for the words of cordial greeting and Christian sympathy which you have been permitted, as the representatives of one of the great religious bodies of this country, to express. Your trials are ours. We have the same battles to fight, we have the same doctrines of Jesus Christ to

proclaim to the world, and we rejoice that there are fields in which we can work together. He then alluded to the scenes in which he had labored, in connection with Bishop McIlvaine, in behalf of dying men on the battle field, and in hospitals, and wherever dying men could be found. He did not believe, that this honored father was ever engaged in more truly apostolic work than when, as he once saw him, he was preaching Christ from the saddle to 1,200 prisoners of war; or when, as he saw him on another occasion, he was kneeling on the bar-room floor of the Planters' Hotel at Fredericksburg by the side of a dying Indian, who had served in the army of the Union, pointing him to a crucified Saviour, and commending his soul in prayer to God. He depicted other scenes deeply affecting to all present.

The President then called upon the Rev. Charles Hodge, of Princeton Theological Seminary, who addressed the deputation as follows:

"I am called upon to speak a word of welcome in behalf of the brethren of the Presbyterian Church, a denomination that is represented by about five thousand ministers, an equal number of churches, and over a million of souls who have been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. I am for the moment the mouth-piece of this body, and allow me to present to you our cordial and affectionate Christian salutation. We wish to assure you, that your names are just as familiar to our people as to your own, and that we appreciate your services in the cause of our common Master, as highly as the people of your own denomination. We rejoice with them in all the good that has been accomplished through your instrumentality. I hope this audience will pardon a reference to what might seem personal under any other circumstances than the present. You, Bishop McIlvaine, and Bishop Johns, whom I had hoped to see on this occasion, and I, were boys together in Princeton College, fifty odd years ago. Evening after evening have we knelt together in prayer. We were baptized in spirit together in the great revival of 1815, in that institution; we sat together year after year in the same class-room, and we were instructed by

the same venerable theological teachers. You have gone your way, and I mine, but I will venture to say, in the presence of this audience, that I do not believe that in all that time you have preached any one sermon, which I would not have rejoiced to have delivered. I feel the same confidence in saying, that I never preached a sermon, which you would not have fully and cordially endorsed. Here we now stand gray-headed, side by side, after more than fifty years, the representatives of these two great bodies, feeling for each other the same intimate and cordial love, looking not backwards, not downwards at the grave at our very feet, but onward to the coming glory. Brethren, pardon these personal allusions, but is there not something that may be regarded as symbolical on this occasion? Sir, were not your Church and ours rocked in the same cradle? Have they not passed through the same Red Sea of trial? Did we not receive the same baptism of the Spirit? Do they not bear the same testimony to Christ and the Apostles? What difference is there between the 39 articles and our Confession, greater than the difference between the different parts of one great cathedral anthem that rises to the skies? Does it not seem to you that these great Churches are coming together? We stand here to declare to the whole world, that we are one in faith, one in baptism, one in hope, and one in allegiance to your Lord and our Lord."

During the delivery of Dr. Hodge's address, tears were falling from almost every eye, and it would be impossible with the pen to convey any adequate impression of the solemnity of the scene.

Rev. Dr. Stearns, of Newark, addressing the delegation, said: "The emotions and impressions of this scene are as strange as they are joyful. We seem now to catch a glimpse of that one United Church, whose beauty the King greatly desireth. It was not from us that the impulse for this interchange of Christian fellowship came. It was from God. Dr. S. referred to the steps which had been taken to unite the two largest of the Presbyterian Churches and subsequently to unite the whole Presbyterian family, and said that in this we did not

dream of hearing such voices from other sources, and of having such sympathy expressed as we have heard on this occasion. We love the Episcopal Church. We love it for her defence of the Faith once delivered to the saints, for her rich and varied Christian literature, and for the names which she has furnished for the noble army of the martyrs. We shall love you more than ever. We are no more strangers and foreigners to each other, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the one household of God, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. He expressed the belief that the day was not far distant when all the Churches of Christ would be found side by side in the great battle for the Truth."

After these addresses, we are told, the assembly spent some moments in silent prayer. Then Bishop McIlvaine led in supplicating God's blessing on this Presbyterian Convention; the Rev. Dr. John Hall, of New York (late of Dublin), followed with like supplication for the Episcopal Church in this country and throughout the world; Bishop Lee offered the Lord's Prayer, the vast assemblage joining; Mr. Stuart, addressing Bishop McIlvaine, repeated the Mosaic blessing, from the closing verses of the sixth chapter of Numbers; the congregation joined in singing the long metre Christian doxology; and finally all was closed with the Apostolic Benediction, solemnly pronounced by Bishop McIlvaine.

Such was the beginning, middle, and end of this highly sensational scene, "in which," says the New York Observer, "every one felt that he had come as near to the communion and spirit of the heavenly world, as it is ever permitted to attain here below."

One can hardly help feeling a certain amount of bathos, in descending from such exaltation to the subsequent work of the Convention, as we find it wholly taken up with settling a Basis of Union for the different sections and segments of the Presbyterian Church. It seems to be a mockery of that nearness to the "communion and spirit of the heavenly world," which had gone before. The work, however, in its way, came to what

was considered to be a triumphant and glorious conclusion. Terms of agreement were settled, and we have them now actually before the world as a *bona fide* Basis of Union, on which all Presbyterian denominations are invited to come together as one Church. The platform embraces four suitably guarded articles, as follows:

"*First*, An acknowledgment of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God and only infallible rule of Faith and Practice.

"*Second*, In the United Church the Westminster Confession of Faith shall be received and adopted as containing the system of doctrines taught in the Holy Scripture, it being understood that this Confession is received in its proper historical, that is, its Calvinistic or Reformed sense.

"Whilst the Committee recommend the foregoing basis of doctrine, they wish to be understood as recognizing the orthodoxy of the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of the Synod of Dort.

"*Third*, The United Church shall receive and adopt the Presbyterian Form of Church Government.

"*Fourth*, The Book of Psalms, which is of divine inspiration, is well adapted to the state of the Church in all ages and circumstances, and should be used in the worship of God. Therefore we recommend that a new and faithful version of the Book of Psalms be provided as soon as practicable. But, in as much as various collections of the Psalmody are used in the different Churches, a change in this respect should not be required."

The Convention, after the parturition of this paper, adjourned late on Friday night, well pleased with its own work. Altogether it was unquestionably a most extraordinary occasion; and it is not strange, that it should be spoken of with enthusiasm afterwards by those, who were made to feel in any way the afflatus of its spirit.

"All who attended the meeting," according to the *New York Observer*, "not only those who came as delegates, but the vast congregation which filled the spacious church day after day

and night after night, felt that God in very deed was there by the power of His Holy Spirit, subduing all hearts and minds, melting them into one, and guiding and controlling the action of this large body of more than three hundred ministers and elders of six branches of the Presbyterian Church. The result to which it came was the more remarkable, inasmuch as when the Convention came together there was no concerted plan of action; no one seemed to know what was to be, or what could be done; but while all hearts were lifted up in prayer for guidance from on high, the answer was given in the spirit of brotherly love and mutual concession and fraternal confidence, which characterized the remarks and proceedings, and in the final result. Many who came to the Convention strongly opposed to the Union of the Churches, regarding it as impracticable and undesirable at present, were convinced that God was in the movement: they expressed themselves as amazed at the divine influence which so evidently pervaded the assembly, and giving up all opposition declared themselves ready for the consummation.

Even the *Presbyterian* falls into a sort of frigid rapture in discoursing of the wonders of the occasion.

"The Convention," it tells us, "was certainly a remarkable body, and has done a remarkable work. It was composed of representative men from the various bodies which sent them up; and of these men, some were among the very foremost men of their respective Churches—conspicuous in their own communions for wisdom, moderation, learning, and attachment to the Churches in which they have ministered or ruled, and ready at all times to defend the principles which they represented. They came together—many of them wondering for what they had been summoned from their homes—some utterly skeptical touching any good results to be reached by these meetings, and others waiting with much curiosity to see what the singular assembly might bring forth. As we looked at them on the evening previous to the regular opening of the Convention, we judged them to be as little likely to be swept away by any gust of enthusiasm, or the soft words of sentimentalism, as any body of men we have

ever chanced to see. Yet it was manifest to any one who watched the Convention, that enthusiasm was its special characteristic, and that the tide of feeling steadily rose from the commencement to the close of its sessions. The most obvious objection, indeed, to the Convention, was that it rapidly changed its character from that of a body calmly and soberly settling the principles upon which a great movement is to be conducted, to that of a mass meeting, manipulated by hands skillful in the management of such enthusiastic gatherings. Men wept, laughed, grasped each other's hands, and disturbed the echoes of the old Covenanter Church with rounds of hearty applause. We heard of one good brother who, in the excess of his joy, shouted, 'Glory, hallelujah,' and did this with genuine Methodist earnestness and emphasis. Those who were not present cannot conceive of the feeling which pervaded the Assembly, and the vast audiences which looked down upon it; and we advise any one who is fond of strong sensations, and was not present, that he has missed the fairest opportunity for indulgence in this kind of excitement, which will be presented to him for many long years." "The prevalent enthusiasm was, of course, greatly intensified by the appearance of the Episcopalians in the Convention. It was with some surprise that the Presbyterians heard that a delegation, with two Bishops at its head, had been appointed to bear the salutations of the Evangelical Episcopalians; but when the body from which this delegation came, marched in, and joined in one of the old Psalms, and then, when the whole company, led by Dr. Richard Newton, joined in prayer to God for the 'precious, elected, justified, and sanctified Church of God,' it was felt by all that we were truly one in Christ Jesus, and that one good Spirit dwelt in all hearts. The services of that morning will surely never be forgotten by any one who was within the walls of that church. The recitation of the Apostles' Creed, as the expression of the unity of all in the one faith of the Church, and the union of all voices in the Lord's Prayer, as the expression of the oneness of all in their wants and desires, were grateful to all hearts; and when Dr. Hodge stepped forth upon the platform, as the representative of the

Presbyterian Church, to greet Bishop McIlvaine, as the representative of his Church, to speak of the years of their boyhood—of their baptism by the Spirit of God—of their years of study at the feet of Dr. Alexander—of the grave, at the margin of which they stood, and of the glowing hopes which lit up the future as they looked beyond the grave, the heart of the great assembly melted, and tears flowed freely from many eyes. It was good to feel, while striving to perfect our Presbyterian unity, that there was a higher unity, in which Christian hearts are bound together by invisible links, and it was with inexpressible joy that great congregation took up the words of the hymn,

‘Blest be the tie that binds,’

and sang it with uplifted voices and swelling hearts. The speeches made on the occasion were imbued with the Spirit of Christ, and none could witness the scene without feeling that ‘one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,’ stand at the foundation of this blessed union of hearts. The effect was, at the time, most happy, and we must hope it will continue to be happy, and the two Churches, although they must still stand apart in their organizations, will be stimulated to ‘love as brethren.’—How much may have been accomplished by the Convention for the union of the Presbyterian Churches, is acknowledged to be not yet entirely clear; but there is room for hope. The immense moral influence of the occasion, we are told, must be all in the line of increased unity of spirit, which will most infallibly work out, in time, a complete organic unity. “Meanwhile (the Presbyterian goes on to say) we think it is well that all the propositions submitted to the Churches by this Convention, are to be considered in Synods and Assemblies, where every word and sentence will be carefully and calmly weighed, and where, we may be sure, the interests of truth and righteousness will be jealously guarded, and the ancient Presbyterian faith and order maintained and re-asserted. How the Basis of Union will pass through the ordeals before it, we cannot presume to foretell; but thousands of hearts will be bitterly disappointed if, out of the movement thus happily inaugurated, there shall not come a

union of the now divided Churches, of the Presbyterian faith, sufficient to establish in this land a National Presbyterian Church, co-extensive in its limits with the nation, and blessing the whole nation by its earnest efforts to build up within its bosom the glorious kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—If, however, this blessed vision is still to tarry, and the dikes which have stood so long, are to stand in the future as hinderances to the general mingling of the waters, the Convention which has just been dissolved, must still be considered as a gathering altogether remarkable and unique, and one well worthy of a place in history. It would be noteworthy if it had been only a meeting of the various branches of the Presbyterian family, gathered together in one, and all finding themselves very much at home. But when the men who belonged to the Church of Cranmer and Hooker came in to mingle with the men of the Church of Calvin and Knox, and the two bodies stood up to repeat the Creed, which has come to us from the early ages of the Church, and bears the Apostles' name, and then lifted up their voices to pray in words taught them by the Redeemer of the world, the scene rose far out of ordinary scenes, and the meeting, with its precious experiences, will be fixed, we believe, in the history of the Church, as one which all true lovers of Christ's Church will not willingly let die. Nor will it be forgotten, we think, in the General Assembly and Church of the first-born."

PART SECOND.

We have thought it well to give a somewhat extended account of this Union Convention; not simply because of its highly interesting character in itself considered, but with the view also of making use of it as an occasion for some practical reflections on the general subject of Church unity, the cause in whose service the meeting was held.

I. All must honor the Convention, as one of the most interesting and significant movements of the time in favor of Christian union.

That the church should be one in some way, may be regarded as one of the first principles of Christianity. It lies, indeed, in the very conception of the Church, as an object of faith, that it should be one, holy, and catholic, according to the Creed; and those who try to conceive of it in any other way, convict themselves, at once, of not being in harmony with this old *regula fidei* in their general view of the Gospel. For the true Christian spirit, then, the existing divisions of the Protestant Church can never fail to be a cause of lamentation and grief.

It will not do to say, that they amount to nothing, as being of outward character only, and not interfering at all with what is called the free unity of the Spirit; and that the unity of Protestantism, therefore, is as little broken really by these denominational distinctions, as is the unity of our nation by its different state governments, or its rival political parties. The two orders of life differ *toto cælo*; and it is little better than treason to the true idea of the kingdom of heaven, to take the measure of it in such sort from the kingdoms of this world. Even this low way of looking at the subject is constrained at once, indeed, to reach beyond its own stand-point again, and to grasp after the notion of some visible unity, as necessary to eke out the felt insufficiency of its invisible abstraction; so powerful here is the instinct of Christianity, even where most wronged; but it is only so as to take up, after all, with the poor imagination of an external confederacy of sect (far short thus of our National Government), agreeing to work together to a certain extent for common ends. To give visible expression to the actual inward unity of Protestant Christendom in such style, we are told, is the grand and glorious mission of the *Evangelical Alliance*; and with this, it seems to be assumed, our craving for the "communion of saints" may afford to be satisfied, at least, for the present, as we are not likely to have anything better before the millennium.

In the end, however, no such low ecclesiasticism can prove generally satisfactory. Never, certainly, for the deeper religious life of Protestantism. The true Christian spirit yearns after *organic* oneness, as the only proper form of Christ's body,

and cannot be put off with the wretched *succedaneum* of an outward world-alliance, however respectable, pompously paraded in its place.

Of this we have abundant evidence, throughout the Protestant world, at the present time. The miseries of our reigning sect system, staring us in the face as they do from all sides, have come to be universally felt and acknowledged. Men are tired of divisions, which seem in most cases to have outlived their original meaning; which weaken so palpably the strength of the Church; and which tend steadily, as all may see, to its universal disintegration. And now there is at work every where, unmistakably, what may be called a deep reactionary tide of feeling and thought, in all the better part of the Protestant world, toward the ideal of the old Christian Creeds—"One Lord, one faith, one baptism," answering to the Pontifical Prayer: "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." All the best theology of the age—whatever there is of theology, indeed, at this time, which is living, and not "twice dead, plucked up by the roots"—looks in this direction, revolves around this problem, "groans and travails in pain," we may say, toward this magnificent end. It is Christological, and, for those, who can understand it, moves throughout in the bosom of the Church Question. There are felt wants, at the same time, in the liturgical life of Protestantism every where, sensibilities of public devotion, that press with strong force in the same general direction. Then we have any amount of platform declamation on the theme of ecclesiastical catholicity and brotherhood, going to show, that the theme is popular, and sure to strike a responsive chord in all religious assemblies. To crown all, we have all sorts of overtures, more particularly of late, toward the outward actualization, in some way, of what is felt to be, in such view, the proper law of the Christian life, and the only true order of the Christian Church. These generally terminate, it is true, in the notion of mere outward leagues, or of very partial amalgamations at the best; but they are none the less worthy

of attention for this, as testimonies in favor of Christian union; while the interest with which they are received is, at the same time, specially significant, as showing how deep-seated and widespread the feeling is, that our religious divisions are wrong, and sadly at war with the true Spirit of Christ.

Among all movements of this sort, now, the Presbyterian Union Convention, held lately in Philadelphia, is entitled to special consideration. It may be regarded, indeed, as the most extraordinary demonstration in favor of Protestant Church unity, which has occurred in our time. It challenges pious admiration, through its spontaneous, apparently self-impelling character; starting as it did from so small a religious body (and out of the large soul, probably, of a single layman, Mr. George H. Stuart); coming before the world with so little observation; and yet meeting such favorable response, and gathering into itself, at last, such an amount of respectability and force as we find to have been comprehended in it in fact. Then the meeting seemed to go beyond itself again in the whole scope of its proceedings; as though it had been apprehended by a spirit greater than its own, which it must afterward try to apprehend as the great object of its coming together. Speaking in behalf of the Old School delegation generally, Dr. Hodge is quoted as saying: "We thought it probable that some plan of federal union, which would allow each member of the confederation to retain its own peculiarities, and to revolve in its own sphere, might be proposed and recommended. But we did not expect that any plan of organic union, embracing all the Presbyterian Churches in our land, would be for a moment thought of." From the first hour of their coming together, however, with the solitary exception of what was spoken by Dr. Breckinridge, every speech and prayer had looked to this end only, as though the Convention had met for no other purpose. "Such being the case," he adds, "I have taken no part in your deliberations, but have sat in silence, waiting to see what God, by His providence and Spirit, would bring to pass." It really seemed as if God had taken the meeting into His own hands, and made it to mean more than any of those concerned in it had originally designed.

Most of all might this appear to have been the case, in the coming in of that strange interlude, which took place on the last day of the meeting, when the Episcopal delegation made its appearance in the crowded Covenanter Church; a scene which was, in the fullest sense, providential, and for which no place, of course, was by any one so much as dreamed of in the programme of the occasion previously. Not only, indeed, did this scene go beyond the original purpose of the Convention; it was felt, for the time, fairly to overshadow it, causing the joyful hope of Presbyterian unity, for the moment, to forget itself in the far more glorious vision of that catholic Christian unity, which the two Churches, Presbyterian and Episcopalian, were drawn to anticipate delightfully in the common recitation of the Apostles' Creed. And it is not to be wondered at, then, if on coming down from that mount of evanescent transfiguration, the Presbyterian disciples, left again to themselves, may have found it, as we have intimated before, a somewhat tame business, to go on settling afterwards the terms of their own much narrower fellowship on the basis of the Westminster Confession. Was there something providential also in this? Was it intended to work as a sacred irony upon the catholic spirit of the Convention, by forcing upon it the glimpse of a still higher catholicity, in whose presence its own became relatively poor and mean?

However that may be, we have no hesitation in allowing the Convention to have been worthy of all admiration and praise. It met for a noble object; was composed of honorable and good men; breathed throughout a most excellent spirit; and did, in its way, true service to the cause of Christianity, which deserves thankful remembrance. This is our first and most immediate reflection on the occasion. We consider it highly important as a protest against the divisions of Presbyterianism, and, in spite of itself, a protest also against the divisions of Protestantism generally; and honor it as one of the most striking testimonies of the time to the necessity, not simply of union among Christians in the low Christian alliance sense, but of organic, catholic unity, in the old sense of the Apostles' Creed, as that without which the true idea of the Church never can be complete.

II. But we find a second reflection forced home upon us, by this Presbyterian congress, which is of a less pleasing and cheering character; a reflection which goes far, in fact, to make us think of it only with sadness, as being in itself one of the most sorrowful exemplifications of the misery of our prevailing sect system, as well as of its helpless, hopeless insufficiency for working out successfully its own cure. We see in the movement strikingly, how radically wrong and absurd our denominational divisions are in their nature, and how fatally in themselves, at the same time, they defy all attempts to bring them back to Church unity. The very law of their existence is divisive. They are constitutionally unchurchly, and under the ban, thus, of perpetual separation.

What more painful evidence could we have of the evil that is comprehended in our sect system, than the fact that there are so many branches of the Presbyterian Church among us, and that it has been felt necessary for a Convention to come together in this way, after so long a time, for the purpose of considering, solemnly and carefully, the possibility of their being joined together as a single Church?

There are distinctions in the history of Christianity, which have a deep principle, and in this way a certain justification, in the wholeness of the Christian life itself. Such was the difference between Jewish and Gentile Christianity in the beginning of the Gospel; such, in some measure, the difference between the Greek Church and the Latin; such the positive faith of Protestantism over against that of Romanism; and such, finally, the original divergency of the two great root Confessions of Protestantism itself in the sixteenth century, which have their proper title still as Lutheran and Reformed. Even these cases of principal division, as it may be called, in which different sides of one and the same organic totality find a certain amount of legitimate expression, are required to come together in the deeper unity of Christ; who is our peace, says St. Paul; the profoundest and most comprehensive sense of our human life; the reconciliation and harmony of all its otherwise necessary antagonisms, where there is neither circumcision nor un-

circumcision, Jew, nor Greek, nor Scythian, male nor female, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all. No such relative justification, however, can possibly apply to the divisions of the Presbyterian Church. We will say nothing of the right of Presbyterianism itself, in its general Scotch form, to narrow the conception of the Reformed Church to its own provincial phase of church discipline and faith; but what *organic* reason can any sound Christian mind possibly pretend to see, in the subsequent divisions of this Scotch Church in Scotland, down to the present time, or, still worse if possible, in the continuance of these divisions, and the origination of new ones, here in America? How many separate Presbyterian bodies (of the Scotch order) there are now in this country, we will not venture to say positively. Eight or ten, certainly—they may amount now, for all we know, to as many as twelve or fifteen. And all these stand not only on the common platform of the Bible, but also on the basis of a common separate phase of the Reformed faith, as we have it drawn out at large in the Westminster Confession! Then they are not ignorant and fanatical sects. They represent, largely, the intelligence, learning, and piety of the land. Yet there they are, holding on to their separate platforms as if the life of the world depended on it; when yet, in fact, it is not too much to say, that neither they themselves, nor the world, have any clear idea whatever of what their several platforms actually mean. We, at all events, have always found it a perfect bore to keep in our mind the run of these Scotch and Scotch-American Presbyterian denominations, with anything like ecclesiastical accuracy, or theological precision. The truth is, there is neither sense nor religion in the subject. It is bewildering confusion from beginning to end.

It is a sad commentary, thus, on the unchurchly character of our Christianity, which the divisions of the Presbyterian Church bring into view; and we cannot help regarding it as a melancholy spectacle, when we find the work of Christian Union, in the case of this Philadelphia Convention, compelled as it were to start with so poor a business as the bringing together in the first place simply of the religious bodies that agree already in

being Presbyterians sworn to the Westminster Confession. It is humiliating to the last degree, that there should be any occasion to begin in this poor way; that divisions so little principal and rational, should not have healed themselves long ago spontaneously; that the subject of their reconciliation should need to be approached with so much caution and trembling apprehension; that so much account should be made of even the remote prospect of their being brought to an end on the basis of union here laboriously produced, as the result of three days' prayerful consultation for the purpose. What an irony, the world may well exclaim, was not the whole work of this Presbyterian Convention in such view, on the cause of Protestant catholicity generally? If it be so hard a business to bring together the broken ranks of a single wing of this vast scattered army, where it would seem to be most of all easy to do so, what must be thought of the prospect for rallying the army at large around any common standard, or into any common organization?

No wonder that these Presbyterian divisions are a matter of perplexing amazement to foreign Churches. "Some two months ago," says Dr. Thomas Guthrie of Edinburgh in his letter read at the Convention, "I attended the sittings of the Evangelical Alliance at Amsterdam. Would that all good men in your country, and in mine, saw things with the eyes of the distinguished representatives of the foreign Evangelical Churches whom I met there! With what astonishment did they hear of any opposition to the proposed union of our Presbyterian Churches! How little, in the eyes of these distinguished men, these impartial and unprejudiced judges, seemed the points on which the opponents of union stood!" Only think of the grand confessional and theological issues of the sixteenth century being made to bend to the question of singing Rouse's Psalms!

But if it be humbling to think of the occasion for such a meeting, it is more humiliating still to find it coming to such small positive result for the accomplishment of its own object. There was much fine talk in the Convention, and much fine

feeling. It was good, all felt, to be there. We wish not to disparage in any way the earnestness of its zeal or the wisdom of its counsels. It did the best it could do, probably, in the circumstances. But this only makes the matter worse. That such a body, convened for such an object, and so borne aloft on what was felt to be the more than human inspiration of the occasion, should after all have been able to bring to pass no more than the tautological basis of union in which all its labors ended, is just what sets the impotence of such a conclusion in its most glaring light. For what better is it than the poorest tautology in fact to say, "Let us come together as Presbyterians on the basis of the Bible and the Westminster Confession;" when that is the very ground on which, as Presbyterians, they have been professedly standing, every sect of them, all along? One can hardly help smiling indeed, to see the account that has been made of this wonderful *form of concord*, as though it were to be a full panacea for the wounds of Joseph, and a talisman that should cause to cease forever the mutual vexings of Ephraim and Judah; while it is not difficult, however, to discern through all, at the same time, an undertone of calculating doubt, that serves to qualify very materially the enthusiasm of so pleasing a thought. Dr. Hodge after waiting in silence "to see what God, by His providence and Spirit, would bring to pass," seems impressed at last with the sense of a direct interposition of heaven in the plan submitted for uniting the Churches. "When the committee appointed to bring in a basis for the organic union of all these Churches," he says, "reported a unanimous agreement, I was greatly surprised; there was nothing in the report, as it seemed to me, to which any old school man could object. The ground of union proposed, was that on which we as a Church had always stood." Of course, it was; and no doubt the other delegations were no less astonished, to find that they too, after waiting to see what would come to pass, were allowed by the proposed union to stand just where they had been standing all along before. The only marvel is that it should have been felt necessary, in so plain a case, to go on afterwards debating and discussing such

terms of consolidation, as if any thing could come out of the discussion more than the self-evident truism with which it started. A grand thing, truly, for a congress of Westminsterian Churches to tell the world, and one another, that they acknowledge the Scriptures to be God's Word, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice; that they subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith; that they hold to the Presbyterian form of Church Government; that they consider the Book of Psalms proper to be used in the worship of God; and that they see no good reason, therefore, why they, and all Presbyterian bodies, should not form themselves into a grand United Church now on this basis. All the world knew the whole of that before. Was it necessary to have it theatrically proclaimed again through this National Presbyterian Convention? And now that the Convention has done and said all it could, in the circumstances, is there any reason at all to expect, that the dream of One, Holy, Catholic Presbyterian Church is ever likely to be realized as the fruit of its labors?

We fear not. Our faith may be weak, our enthusiasm poor; but so it is, we have no power to take in any such joyous prospect. We cannot help thinking that Dr. Breckinridge was more than half right, in trying to throw cold water on the idea of organic union at the beginning of the meeting; though it was well, perhaps, that he was stopped off at the time, and was hindered by sickness from having any thing to do with the business of the body afterwards. It would carry us too far to give in detail our reasons for believing that little or nothing will come of this movement. Enough that we can easily feel a measure of distrust in it, running through the proceedings of the Convention itself. Enough that it is allowed to be only the beginning of a long series of complicated negotiations among the bodies invited to come into it, which are sure to be met with endless practical difficulties not yet touched. Enough, that all past experience is against its having any chance of success. The rule with such attempts at amalgamation heretofore, has been in general, that two bodies have become three, rather than one. It is becoming only too plain, we think, that even the Old and New School Presbyterian Churches, after all the

talk there has been on the subject, are not likely soon to be reunited. But without this, what shadow of ground can there be to look for any such union among the Presbyterian Churches of the country generally? As the Philadelphia *Basis* means nothing, so it is almost certain finally to issue in nothing, according to the old adage *ex nihilo nihil fit*.

III. This is melancholy; but not altogether so much so as on first view it might seem. We would be glad to see the different branches of Presbyterianism united into one Church. It is a reproach to our Christianity that they cannot be thus brought together, all holding the Bible as they do for their only rule of faith, and all standing alike on the Westminster Confession as their common platform of doctrine; and the fact is as painful a commentary certainly as we could well have, on the helpless misery of our sect system generally. But so far as the cause of true catholic unity is concerned, the great Christian thought that underlies all these calls for Church union, we cannot see that this Presbyterian movement means much, or that its full success would be of any very great account. Its highest object after all has not been catholic unity in any true sense, as this is made to be a point of faith in the Apostles' Creed, but only denominational unity in the case of a particular sect; which, however large and respectable, can by no possibility represent the proper wholeness of the Church.

We may be told, indeed, that the work of general Church union must begin with particular confessional unions; and that when the several Christian denominations are first fully united in themselves, the way will then be open for aiming at the higher object of forming them all at last into one Church. Some fancy of this sort seems in fact to have been more or less in the mind of the Union Convention in Dr. Wylie's Church, while busily engaged with its dream of catholic Presbyterianism. Through that dream there was the dim, but still warmly glowing vision all along of a higher catholicity lying beyond, to which it was hoped that first step might ultimately lead. We have seen how powerfully this feeling prevailed, especially in the scene with the Episcopalians. "The heart of the great assembly melted," we are told, "and tears flowed freely from

many eyes. It was good to feel, while striving to perfect our Presbyterian unity, that there was a higher unity, in which Christian hearts are bound together by invisible links; and it was with inexpressible joy that great congregation took up the words of the hymn, *Blest be the tie that binds*, and sang it with uplifted voices and swelling hearts." All very beautiful and affecting. But all, we must reiterate, going only to stultify the whole business of that Presbyterian Council, which was assembled there for the purpose solely of consolidating a powerful exclusivism, on the basis of a very narrow and partial confession, that should stand then as a high tower of defence and opposition over against the whole idea of Christian catholicity under any broader view. Can we believe that there was any real affinity between such sectarianism and those deep yearnings after "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," which we find forcing themselves into view so remarkably through the whole occasion, and giving to it in fact its main interest? We, for our part, believe nothing of the sort. The yearnings were there as pent up fires, in spite of the sectarian restraint. There was no real approximation whatever in the sectarianism itself, as such, to the true idea of Church unity; and it will be found a vain imagination forever, we are fully persuaded, to think of coming to such union ultimately through any such process of preliminary sect unions. Sectarianism is by its very conception the opposite of catholicity, and it can never be made to promote of itself the consummation of our Lord's last prayer: "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee!" If the sense of that prayer is ever to be actualized among our lamentable Protestant divisions, it must be through some other order of thought, some wholly different form of Church sentiment and Church life.

If ever the Apostolic idea of Church unity is to be restored practically among our denominations, it must work itself into felt force first as an idea starting from itself, and not as a generalization merely derived from these sects. There must be awakened and quickened among us, in some way, a sense for the proper wholeness of the Church, that shall go before, and

not simply come after our sense for the Christianity of our several sects. Full earnest must be made with the article of the Creed: "*I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.*" This need not imply indifference to our denominational confessions, as they now stand; but it must require the subjection of our interest in these particular confessions to our interest in the wholeness of the Christian faith and life, as something more than an abstraction; as itself the power of a confession deeper and more comprehensive than all denominational confessions, the necessary beginning thus of the Christian faith, on the basis of which, then, all such particular confessions must stand, to be entitled to any confidence or regard whatever. Where there is a due sense of this necessary relation of the partial to the whole, the different Christian confessions may assert their differences without wrong or damage to the whole; their polemics become in fact irenics, antithesis with a view to ultimate synthesis; and it is easy to see how, in that case, such union movements as we are here considering, though meant primarily only for a single denomination, might yet look, and actually work, also, toward the unity of the Church in a broader and wider view. But can this be considered the character, really, of what is proposed in the Presbyterian movement now before us? We fear not. It is, on the contrary, we think, such an assertion of denominational particularism, as neither seeks nor tends toward true catholicity in any way; and for this reason, if for no other, its failure or success is not a matter that need concern much those who care for the unity of the Church as a whole, and not simply for the unity of the Presbyterian Church as a sect.

All confessionalism, all denominational symbolism, to be of a truly catholic, and not merely sectarian character, must refer itself ultimately to the Apostles' Creed, as the primary basis of the universal Christian faith. So much we feel at liberty to assume here as a first truth in historical theology. Deny the necessity of starting with the Creed, the necessity of being rooted and grounded in the first principles of Christianity, as we have them set forth in this archetypal symbol, and all religious thinking is at sea. So the Church has witnessed through all ages.

Protestantism, by its own original confession, has no right to exist except in the bosom of the Creed. And so, then, its divergent types or schemes of confessional belief, also, as far as they can be considered to have any historical justification, any true organic position (in distinction from mere upstart sects) in its general movement, must continue organically bound to the same root. Sundered from this, their symbolism can deserve no respect. Here Lutheranism, Anglicanism, Presbyterianism, Methodism, and New England Puritanism, are required to meet on common ground, back of their other platforms of faith; and these platforms must plant themselves on this common ground to carry with them any legitimate force as separate confessions. Without this they cease to be historical, and lose all harmonious relation to the proper unity and wholeness of the Church. All true catholicity, unquestionably, must begin with the cordial, *ex animo* acknowledgment of the Apostles' Creed.

Is it not now, however, something very significant that the schemes of Christian union, of which we hear so much in our time, all seem to take it for granted, that if it is to be reached at all, or to be of any account when reached, it must be based on other articles and terms of agreement than those contained in the Creed—this old, fundamental symbol being either ignored entirely in the case, or, at best, acknowledged only in a secondary and outside way? Congregational Churches have their terms of particular church fellowship in this way, their "Covenants," as they are sometimes called, to which all must subscribe who come into their communion. But who ever heard of one of them making use of the Apostles' Creed for this purpose? Some years ago some New England Missionaries undertook to manufacture a system of Evangelical faith for the new Protestant Armenian Church they had organized in Constantinople. There was no recognition in it whatever of the Creed. So, it will be remembered, the great religious World Convention in London, some twenty years ago, in undertaking to construct an œcumenical platform for the union of all *evangelical* sects, found it necessary to omit all mention of the Creed, and devised a new set of articles altogether as better suited for the purpose;

and the same course has been pursued by every Evangelical Alliance meeting we have had since. The Creed of Universal Christendom has been counted too poor a bond for holding together these Protestant Unions, and they have been fain always to proclaim the strength of their common Christianity in some different way. And thus it is with our union religious associations and movements generally. They abound in sentimental declamation, and please themselves with the notion of a Christianity that is common to all sects. But their catholicity, base itself where it may, is sure never to fall back on the Apostles' Creed.

We are sorry to say, now, that the late Presbyterian Union Convention formed no exception to this bad rule; and that fact is enough of itself to destroy confidence in its work. It is easy to see, at once, that a basis of Christian union which is not itself based upon the Creed, can be of no account—must, indeed, be worse than of no account—for the cause of catholic unity properly so called. But we may go farther and say, that Presbyterianism itself can never be united with any vigorous church life on any such baseless basis. Presbyterian Christianity without the Creed, will prove as little able to stand in the end, whether united or divided, as Christianity without the Creed under any other form.

But was not the Apostles' Creed duly honored and magnified on this occasion, when that stirring scene went forward on Friday morning, in which Presbyterians and Episcopalians, led off by Prof. H. B. Smith, joined with one voice in solemnly repeating the œcumenical symbol, as the expression of their common faith? It is pleasant, certainly, to hear what was thus done in honor of the Creed. It reads well; and it is curious to see how the thing has been held up for rhetorical effect, even in quarters where all real sympathy with the genuine sense of the Creed is notoriously wanting. The truth is, it was an involuntary homage to catholicity, which was forced upon the assembly by what might be called the objective spirit of the occasion; a power that, for the moment, carried the Convention beyond

itself, and lifted it out of its own sphere; as all inspiration, indeed, causes men to speak, or it may be sing, with new tongues.

In this view the fact is highly interesting, as showing how near in reality, for our deepest religious consciousness, the Creed lies to the foundations of all true Christian faith; but farther than this it cannot be taken as of much significance or account. It was a flash of enthusiasm that came and went with its occasion, without leaving behind it any practical result in the actual working of the Convention.

It may be questioned, indeed, whether even this public acknowledgment of the Creed amounted, in the circumstances, to as much as it might appear to mean at first view. We call to mind other occasions of late, on which the same thing has been done in religious meetings, as one evidence of their Christian union; where it was plain enough, however, that it was done for mere stage effect, and without any general hearty acceptance of the symbol whatever. It is an easy thing for our different sects to fall in with the recitation of the Creed, if they are allowed to put into it severally their own meaning. But in this case, the recitation becomes, of course, an empty, if not absolutely hypocritical compliment. And that it must be so with our sects generally at this time, is placed beyond all doubt by the known fact that they make no use of the Creed in their ordinary religion, but have, on the contrary, a certain feeling of strangeness toward it wherever it comes in their way. New England Puritanism, by its own confession, has lost the sense of all harmony with the Creed, honoring it, at best, as a dead "fossil relic," simply, of "by-gone times;" and our sects commonly, there is no doubt, regard it quietly in the same way. Nor is the feeling one of mere indifference; it amounts to positive aversion. For after all that may be said of its loose and vague meaning, making it easy for all to mouth it, in a sense to suit themselves, it is certain not only that the symbol has a determinate historical sense of its own, but also that this, its only proper sense, is so wrought into its whole structure, that it cannot fairly be got out of it except by breaking it to pieces; and it is always the instinctive consciousness of opposition to

what is felt to be thus the true life and spirit of the Creed, therefore, that makes it unpalatable to the Christian sects with whom it has fallen into neglect. They do not use the Creed simply because they do not like it, are in no sympathy with it, feel it to be, at bottom, a witness against them, and not for them. Only so can we account for the strange fact, that these sects should own the fundamental authority of the old formulary, and yet allow it no place, practically, in their families, or in their schools, or in their churches. Where their difficulty with it really lies, may, at the same time, be easily understood. They are unhistorical, therefore unchurchly, and for this reason, again, unsacramental; whereas the Creed is historical, makes the Church an object of faith, and throws a sacramental character round the mystery of godliness throughout; all so effectually, that its whole theory of Christianity is felt, by these sects themselves, to be different from the scheme in which they stand. And hence it is that they feel toward it always very much as Ahab felt in another case of old, when he said to Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah: "There is yet one man, Micahiah, the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the Lord; but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." Exactly so; the Apostles' Creed is a perpetual prophecy of evil against our modern evangelical sects; and therefore they will not allow its voice to be heard in their teaching or worship. If they did, it would soon bring their whole craft into danger of being set at nought. This is the secret of their dislike to it.

We see at once what a farce it must be, when such utterly unhistorical religions may pretend, at times, to recite the Creed, in token of their own unanimity, and as an argument of their general agreement with the faith of past Christian ages. It is all hollow mummery of the worst sort. In the case of the Presbyterian Convention now before us, we would hope there was something better than this. But it is hard to believe, that the use of the Creed on that occasion amounted to a full *ex animo* assent and consent to all its articles in their true historical sense. We know it ought to have done so; for both

Churches, the Presbyterian no less than the Episcopalian, are bound by their denominational confessions to own the symbolical authority of the old *regula fidei*, as we have it handed down to us in this formulary; and to be owned at all honestly as being of such force, it must be owned as being so in the character of a rule fundamental to all other confessional rules—and so here, of course, a rule fundamental and anterior in particular to the Thirty-Nine Articles, and the Westminster Confession of Faith. Such being the case, it should be an easy thing for Presbyterians and Episcopalians to join, at any time, as they did in Dr. Wylie's Church, in repeating the Apostles' Creed. But, somehow, we cannot help feeling that it is a great matter to say the Creed *ex animo*. The feeling grows upon us, too, the more we look into the subject; and we cannot avoid asking: Did these different divisions of the Presbyterian camp (to say nothing now of their Low Church Episcopalian guests), know fully, and mean really, what they were outwardly doing, when they thus fell back with common confession on the original faith of the universal Christian world? We will not now press the question any farther. But we must say that if they did do so, we despair of being able to understand at all how it is, that there should be no use of the Creed, so far as we know, in the ordinary worship of Presbyterian churches of every sort at other times, beyond and outside of this grand "act and testimony" in Philadelphia; and how it is, also, that the same act and testimony was not able to secure a place for itself in the *Basis of Union*, which it was the great object of the meeting to establish for the consolidation of Presbyterianism into a single Church.

A basis of faith for such purpose, in which you have the Westminster Confession, with some recognition even of the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Articles of Dordrecht, and yet no mention of the Apostles' Creed (the first and most fundamental of all symbols), any more than if it had never been heard of, or had never had anything to do with Presbyterianism whatever! Is it not ominously strange? Even as a mere oversight, it would tell powerfully against the reigning animus of the occasion. For, how could the Creed be forgotten, where all was

suitied to call it to mind, if there had been there any hearty sympathy with the Creed, any full confidence in the Creed, But we know that its omission in the basis of union was no mere oversight. It was made to figure too prominently in the fraternizing scene with the Episcopalians, to admit any thought of that sort; and no doubt there were those in the Convention, who would have been glad if the catholic chord then struck could have furnished the key-note for the confessional work of the body afterwards. But it was soon, alas, lost again in the skies. Another noticeable reminder of what was due here to the occasion, we have in a paper offered to the meeting by the Rev. Dr. Beattie, of Steubenville, Ohio, in which, among other propositions submitted for consideration as terms of church fellowship, we find the following explicit acknowledgement of the authority of the Creed, as coming confessionally *before* all later symbols: "We affirm our belief in that summary of Christian doctrine which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, which we receive as setting forth, in brief, most important doctrines of the Gospel of Jesus Christ." This itself carries in it, we can easily feel, a somewhat poor and cold sound. It lacks the tone of full catholic sympathy with what the Creed is in its own place. But, as it was, it proved too high for the low church temperature of the Convention; never getting so far, indeed as to be even noticed by the Committee which reported the basis of union. We are thus shut up painfully to the conclusion that in framing a platform of faith for the union of the different Presbyterian bodies in the United States, this Philadelphia Convention, with all its catholic sensibilities, did not dare to believe that these bodies could be brought to unite in the common adoption of the Apostles' Creed, as the only true and right beginning of all sound Christian belief and profession; and so, deliberately and of purpose, the Apostles' Creed was excluded from the platform altogether! Such we feel to be the meaning of the whole case. We can make of it nothing more nor less than this.

The conclusion to which we are thus brought, speaks for itself. The occasion we have been reviewing is of no signifi-

cance, we believe, for the interests of Presbyterianism itself. There can be no solidly United Church, even in that partial form, that shall refuse to plant itself, confessionally, on the original Christian Creeds, as all our evangelical Protestantism professed to do in the beginning. Of still less account then can any such movement prove to be for the interests of Christianity at large, or for the actualization of any such millennial vision of Catholic unity as seems to have floated at times before the mind of this venerable and highly respectable Church Council. If anything in the world is certain, we think it is, that no such Catholic unity, whether in theology, or in worship, or in Church life, can ever be reached except on the basis of the old Creeds, taken in their old, only true historical sense; and that the first, and most necessary of all conditions, therefore, for any effectual movement toward this end, is the resuscitation of interest in these Creeds; while all that works the opposite way in our modern religious life, tends wholly and inevitably toward disintegration only, and ultimate chaos.

ART. VI.—CHRISTIAN NURTURE.

The fact of the total and universal depravity of our race is clearly set forth in the Bible and confirmed by all experience. The confession of David, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me," and the declaration of God that the "imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth," may be justly applied to every human being. And this is in virtue of our relation to our first parent. As descended from him by natural generation we are not only like him in outward form and inward spirit but we participate with him truly and properly in his very nature. We are as much the partakers of his sinful nature as we are of his blood. The whole human family was originally contained potentially in the loins of Adam, and all who have sprung from him are necessa-

rily tainted with his impurity. Human origin is a guarantee of vileness, for it is a law of God's universe, that, that which is clean cannot come from that which is unclean. Accordingly it is written, "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners," and "By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation."

From this general imputation or charge of sin even infants are not exempt. One of the strongest practical proofs of this is found in the fact that they are liable to suffering and death before they arrive at the age of accountability, because suffering and death can only come as a consequence of sin. "For," says the apostle, "by one man sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The most that men generally have claimed for a child in its natural state, is, that it has not been guilty of actual and wilful transgression, and may therefore be regarded as being in a state of innocence. But *innocence* itself we must remember is only a negative quality, while positive holiness is required by God, and even those that die in infancy have the righteousness of Christ made over to them by the Holy Ghost, and thus appear in that "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

But the bare fact that every one of all the myriads who have survived infancy has given evidence of sinfulness, is an overwhelming testimony to the fact that the general proclivity of our nature is towards sin. And even if no traces of sin could be detected in the child, that would be no positive evidence against its natural depravity. There are certain colors that are not at first visible to the eye, and yet in the course of time and by exposure to light and heat, they will according to a chemical law intrinsic to themselves become apparent to all. And just so the sin which we might not be able to detect at first, will in the course of time according to the law of our depraved nature and upon the least occasion, show itself beyond all doubt. But this tendency to sin, we insist upon it, is often exhibited even in the child long before the dawn of consciousness. It is betrayed in the anger and passion which the child

exhibits at its mother's breast, and we must therefore conclude that the manifestation of sin is nothing more than an outward expression of its inmost nature. It is a sinner constitutionally, and the uninterrupted development of its own nature will necessarily be a growth in sin.

From all of this it is evident that what is required for the salvation of our children, is not a mere drawing out of what is already in them, but the instillation of something new and counteracting. This is the difference between the terms 'educate' and 'nurture.' "The word 'educate' simply designates a drawing out of what is already at hand, and this term is never used in the Scriptures, because as just intimated, we are not to become what we ought to be by a mere development of what is already in us. The idea of Christian nurture set forth so frequently in the Bible, underlies this and implies more than this." It involves the fact that something higher and better is to be supplied from without—that life and grace and power have been brought into the service of our humanity in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord, and are to be made over to us by the operation of the Holy Ghost. "Education may be a training and trimming of the branches, while nurture is a feeding of the roots. In the language of another "Nurture is to the child what the warmth, the moisture and the fat of the earth are to the roots of the infant plant; what the light and love of the mother's eye, the warmth and nourishment of the mother's breast are to the unconscious babe, which is there and there gladly, but knows not and cares not why. According to the true sense of nurture children are to be nourished *in* the Lord and not educated *into* Him." Hence we have such commands as these, "Children obey your parents *in the Lord*: for this is right." "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up *in the nurture* and admonition of the Lord." But now how are children to be incorporated into Christ so as to be *in* the Lord? How can they be made partakers of that *life* which is to be nurtured. By nature they are in Adam and not in Christ; they are the children of the Devil and of course dead unto God. And if they are to become alive unto God in Christ it must be by a Divine transaction—an act on God's part by

which those dead in trespasses and in sins are quickened. This new life is given in Holy Baptism. That which is born of the flesh must be born again of water and the Spirit. Those to whom power is given to become the sons of God are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ," said St. Peter on the day of Pentecost, "for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." That means that what has been *promised* to parents and their seed is to be actually *conferred* in Baptism. In that Holy Sacrament the life of God mediated to our humanity by the incarnation of the Son of God is to be made over to us by the Holy Ghost. And hence the written word of God not only sets forth our Holy Religion as a new life in Christ, but speaks so much about the *beginning* of that life in connection with baptism. It is called the "*washing of regeneration*" (Titus iii. 5), *quickening* (Col. ii. 13). It is said that we must be "*born again*" (Jn. iii. 7); *born* of water and the Spirit if we would *see* or *enter* the kingdom of Heaven (Jn. iii. 3, 5); *born* of God and thus become the *sons* of God (Jn. i. 12); saved by water (1 Peter iii. 20, 21). With this regeneration infants have no more to do than with their natural generation. That is an act of God, in his own appointed way and the life thus commenced underlies and precedes, all consciousness, all thought, all faith, hope, and charity. If we say any thing else we not only ignore the analogy between our natural and spiritual life, but we declare plainly that children who have been made partakers of the first Adam's sinful nature without their own knowledge and consent cannot be made partakers of the Second Adam's righteousness without some greater conscious agency. They can die in the one but not be made alive in the other. And where then is the gracious counterpart of their ruined condition, in Christ? The whole ground and scope of human existence is not covered by the person and work of Christ. Children at least cannot regain in Him, all that they lost in their first parent. Sin may abound where grace cannot abound.

From all this we see that the children of Christian parents sustain a new and vital relation to Christ in virtue of their baptism. The covenant and promise bestowed upon parents included their seed. By baptism they are planted together in the likeness of the Saviour's death that in that position they may rise in the likeness of His resurrection. Those who are baptized into Christ have put on Christ, and if thereafter they change their relation to God, it must be by departing from Him, and not by coming to Him. "Those who are baptized are represented as in the same position as Noah in the ark, saved if they go not out of it. Those in the covenant saved if they break not from it. To be nurtured in the covenant is to be nurtured in Christ. Hence we find that the Scriptures always speak of those that are covenanted in baptism, as His people,—as in a gracious position and state as heirs. They are always addressed as such; you are my people, forsake me not, "you have promises and hopes cast them not away. Children in the Church are represented as planted in the house of the Lord, where they are to grow in grace being nurtured into the full stature of men in Christ, by the resources which the church furnishes." *

But whatever life and grace is thus imparted to the child by the blessed influence and energizing power of the Holy Spirit in baptism must be regarded as in the form of a *germ*; and as in the world of nature so in the sphere of grace there may be and are, thousands of possibilities that are never realized. The acorn may contain the oak potentially and yet never put forth a sprout in token of the fact; many beautiful and promising buds never come to fruit, and simply because the conditions required are not present. Just so, certain conditions are required in order that the life of God in the soul may be continued and developed. As in the case of the adult so in the case of the child, this divine life must be nourished and fed; *and here is a duty that God requires at the hand of parents.* The obligation to bring up those who have been placed in a saving relation to

* Dr. Harbaugh's sermon on Parochial Schools.—*Mer. Rev.*

Christ, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord is an essential part of their Christian duty. It flows out of the duty of having their children baptized as a necessary counterpart. The whole obligation of parents is not fulfilled when that initiatory sacrament has been administered to their offspring. On the other hand when they thus recognize the duty which they owe to their children, they openly express their desire that they may grow up in the knowledge and fear of God, and not only have life, but have it more abundantly; and they promise that they will faithfully strive by the grace of God, that nothing shall be wanting on their part to effect this holy and blessed end. Those promises are all recorded in heaven, and those who make them are solemnly and really expected to fulfil them. When God made the covenant with Abraham to be a God to his seed after him in their generations, He said, "I know Abraham that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him." (Gen. xviii. 19). Here it expressly states that Abraham was to do his part *in order that* the Lord might realize to him the blessing guaranteed in the covenant. And thus every man and woman among us is bound to be true to his or her engagement, before it can be expected that God will fulfil the pledges of love He has given to us in regard to our children. He has not promised to confirm the hope that is in us of our children in such a way as to keep them from sin and in the way of holiness independently of any thing that we may do or fail to do. We are the instruments by which this is to be effected, and if we withhold our influence, and refuse to be made instruments according to His purpose, we have no right to expect any thing at His hands. Having received our children in Christ as heirs of His kingdom upon pledges of our fidelity, He has commanded us to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; to train them up in the way that they should go, and *then* He has promised that they shall "not depart from it."

The obligation that parents are thus under to bring up their

children in the Lord being thus established from the nature of the case as well as from plain declarations of Scripture, it is evident that this duty must commence at the very dawn of the child's existence—long before it is susceptible of Sunday School instruction. When we are told to "train up" a child in the way that he should go, it is meant that we should so "train it up," not let it first grow up in sin and then try to reclaim it by some uncertain event which may be brought to bear in its mind upon its eternal welfare. That were to give the world, the flesh and the devil all the vantage ground—to yield the advantages of its earliest years when it is most susceptible of good and lasting impressions. This, alas! is too often done, and the result of it is too frightful to be told. In many of the cases in which it is done, the probabilities are that those thus neglected will never be brought to a full surrender to the claims of religion. Satan always takes advantage of our neglect. The neglected ones become attached to the world, engrossed in its interests and insensible to the claims of God; and unless He interferes by some extraordinary manifestation of His mercy, upon which we have no right to presume, there is every reason to suppose that they will go on until they sink into the bottomless pit to rise no more forever. Thousands are thus carried down to eternal death simply because of paternal neglect. And yet with the practical results of this system before our eyes we are often asked to peril the immortal interests of our children through some infidel idea that the Spirit of God is not expected to operate upon their hearts, or through fear of giving a wrong bias to their minds on the subject of religion.* "These things ought not so to be." The duty of the parent to his child commences at the hour of its birth. On entering the world, the infant, a sensitive mass of passive organized matter, enclosing the germ of a spiritual being, is committed for protection and nurture to the care and offices of parents.

It has been truly said that "Nurture precedes, in order, education or training. As the germ of the vine is nourished in

* Rousseau's theory and the theory of a great many others who would not like to be classed with him or take the consequence of his system.

the bosom of the earth, and nurtured out of it, so the life of nurture is moulding the infant being before it is sufficiently aware of the outward world to be affected by its reasons and regulations in such a way as is involved in the idea of education. Hence nurture includes those more hidden and delicate appliances which exert so great an influence on the infant being without its own will, knowledge, or co-operation. Months elapse before it can understand the simplest word, during which time the impressions made upon it, are conveyed by the mode in which it is physically treated by those around it; by the tones of their voices and the expressions of their countenances. And no one has a right to say that its spiritual nurture has not already begun; that as to any effect upon its character, it is a matter of indifference whether the manifestations to which it is subjected are gentle or rough, whether the tones that fall upon its ears are affectionate and soothing, or harsh and irritating; whether the countenances to which it looks up always beam with kindness and love, or are frequently darkened with the frown and glare of evil passions." Like begets like. It is a law of our nature as well as of matter that we will become assimilated to what is around us even in unconscious infancy. Even then the child is to be met with the assimilative power of the eye, the temper and the spirit. And when the receptive faculties begin to expand, when the mind, naturally inquisitive and thirsting for knowledge and at the same time docile and credulous, begins to seek after truth, even then is the babe, in Christ to be fed with the pure milk of the word. A sense of its natural depravity is to be impressed upon it before the thick incrustations of sin have made it insensible to the fact. With this depravity the holiness of God should be contrasted. The child should be especially familiarized with the fact that Christ Jesus, the God-man, has made the atonement, and that in Him it may regain all it ever lost in the first Adam. It should be impressed with the near and endearing relation which it is brought to sustain to Christ in virtue of its baptism,—that God has already become its reconciled Father for Christ's sake." And with His word and example before it, it is to be taught that His life is to be

the pattern of its own, a way that it may by the operation of the Holy Spirit be able to say the life that I now live I live not of myself but Christ liveth in me. Every tendency to sin is to be promptly met by word, by precept and by example in such a way as to counteract it, by the blessing of God. Thus the principles of holiness as believed in the heart, confessed with the mouth and practiced in the life are to be diligently inculcated into the children as they grow up. Like Timothy they are to be indoctrinated from their youth up in the holy scriptures which are able to make them wise unto salvation through the faith which is in Christ Jesus, and exhorted to continue in the things which they have learned. Thus they are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Their progress is to be in the light which beams upon the "path of the just, shining more and more unto the perfect day."

It is of course not said here that the child can be made a Christian by the unaided influence and teaching of the parent. It may be brought by the force of example to a kind of correctness of moral action, and yet not grow in the Divine life. It may be well grounded in doctrine and orthodoxy, and yet have no saving knowledge of the truth in its heart. But if Christian nurture and instruction is commenced early and followed up prayerfully, the receptive faculties of the child will take in the spiritual food thus afforded to it, and the *Holy Spirit will so sanctify all* that the new life will be sustained and manifest itself outwardly by the peaceable fruits of holiness.

But while it is true that this blessed work is not to be achieved by the unaided influence and teachings of parents, it is no insignificant fact that the duty of Christian nurture is especially enjoined upon them in God's Holy Word. For as God has made this duty incumbent upon them, so He has afforded them every advantage for its proper performance. "For," as has been justly said by another, "during the period that the opening faculties are in that absorbent state which makes them liable to drink in every impression, the child is completely submerged in the waters of paternal influence. Its very being finds its prototype in theirs, and it instinctively acknowledges the sym-

pathy and support it receives at their hands as the necessary complement of its well being. They are its oracles in matters of religious truth, their opinions and practice its standard of right in questions of moral obligation.

The parent too, is invested with authority over the child, but even proper *discipline* must be exercised in the spirit of love. This unfortunately is not always borne in mind, and to this may be attributed the fact that the corrections which parents administer are so often of no avail. It very frequently happens that parents inflict punishment upon a child, not so much to reform the action of the child as to gratify an angry feeling on their own part, which may have been provoked by its disobedience. The severity or lightness of the punishment depends upon the mere humor of the parent. In an impulsive moment the punishment is almost brutal, while if the parent's own excitement is allowed to pass off, the child is suffered to escape entirely. And this is true not only of corporeal punishment, but also of the rebukes and reproofs which parents sometimes administer. It is not an uncommon thing for parents to censure, not on account of any thing really censurable in their children, but because of a constitutional or habitual ill humor peculiar to themselves. When this is the case it will be apparent to the child and produce a bad instead of a good effect, and such parents need not be at all surprised if they find their children self-willed and passionate like themselves. Hence the command of the Apostle, "Ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath, lest they be discouraged." The spirit of the one will be transmitted to the other, and parents should see to it that the faults they are called upon to correct in their children are not simply their own faults reflected in their children. He that has the spirit of a friend cannot help but communicate the spirit of a friend, just as truly as he that has the spirit of Christ cannot help but communicate the spirit of Christ.

It is evident from all this that the parent in order to do his whole duty must not only teach the doctrine of a Christian but live the life of a Christian. Religion is not to be a matter outside of him, called to his aid, now and then, on particular

occasions and under certain circumstances. It must be in him and speak out of him continually. The spirit of Christ is to pervade his whole being and characterize his severest action.

But if parents themselves are true Christians, "wise as serpents and harmless as doves," always bearing about the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifest in their bodies, and make use of the means of Christian culture, their tender offspring will by the blessing of the Holy Spirit become babes and sucklings in Christ to perfect His praise. The piety of the parent will become the piety of the child. It will be perpetuated in the line of family succession; not indeed by ordinary generation, nor by any mere assimilation, not in any way in which we have not an instance in the Bible, but as we are told the faith of Timothy dwelt first in his grand-mother Lois, and then in his mother Eunice, and last of all in him also, although his father was a Greek. (2 Tim. i. 5).

If a child is thus nurtured in the real divine life, we need not necessarily suppose that a technical experience or sudden violent transition is necessary to constitute it a Christian. The duty of consecration and nurture rightly performed, it may be expected that the germ of a new life already imparted to the child in baptism will be developed, and that the child will grow up a Christian without remembering any particular moment or set of conscious exercises by which it became a child of God. That germ we have a right to presume has been imparted to it in the earliest stages of its existence, and then by continued nurture its advancement in the divine life will be just as certain, just as uniform and just as continuous as its advancement in natural life. As it grows up from childhood to manhood, so from being a babe in Christ it will attain to the fullness of stature of a man or a woman in Christ. Thus its *whole* life will be devoted to God, instead of only the latter part of it. Upon arriving at the proper age it will be fitted and willing to take its place in the Church, and thus the family would be the nursery and feeder of the Church.

Of course now it cannot be expected that the neglect of the duties thus naturally and constitutionally devolving upon Chris-

tian parents can be made up in any other way. It is especially a wrong idea to suppose that all can be safely committed to the care of a Sunday School. For, besides the fact intimated throughout this article, that it is a long while before the child is fitted by age and preparation to receive Sunday School instruction, Sunday Schools as now conducted are often notoriously inefficient in their operations. At best they never were intended to supplant the family, and so long as they are regarded as mere human institutions having their end within themselves as institutions;—so long as they are built up by the side of the Church to teach children religious truth, to be sure, but vaguely and indefinitely, and then dismiss them at a certain age into the world instead of into the Church, it will be found that instead of effecting the most general good, they will stand injuriously between the family and the Church, by assuming the functions of both and performing the duties of neither. And this is the tendency and the danger now. When Sunday Schools were first established they were intended for those who had no parents, or whose parents were indifferent to the eternal interests of their children. And for a long time afterwards they were regarded as mere auxiliaries to Christian parents and pastors. But, in these last days, they are too often looked upon as mere spiritual foundling hospitals, at the gates of which parents may place their little ones, and thus avoid not only the performance, but even the acknowledgment of their duty. To these, many a parent says, "Take this child, and nurse it for me," with all the magisterial confidence of Pharaoh's daughter, when she found the young Hebrew in the bulrushes. And it turns out none the better, but all the worse in this case, that the child is *taken from*, rather than *restored to*, its natural mother. The habit of giving out children to be spiritually nursed may be very convenient, but it is pre-eminently unnatural, and the willingness of parents to do it, shows a want of consideration, and an amount of indifference that is one of the worst features of the case. It seeks to transfer a most solemn personal duty from those whom God, not arbitrarily, but for vital, constitutional reasons, has appointed to the trust;

to those who in the nature of the case cannot be in positions to perform it. It changes God's plan; and this can never be done without affecting, and absolutely endangering any interest. Can it be expected that a pastor or Sunday School teacher, who, however faithful he may be, yet sustains no natural vital relation to a child, and can only meet it at intervals, should make up for the deficiency of parents? Is it any wonder, when parents practically commit the whole religious interest of their children to teachers, who are, at best, but "helpers," that there should be in the midst of all our religious advantages, so much spiritual starvation? Is it any wonder that there should be so much reason to say, with the prophet: "The tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth: the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it to them?" Ah! however good, and great, and glorious, Sunday Schools have been, better disband them at once, if they are to become the mere scapegoat for paternal neglect.

There is no need for this, however. Sunday Schools may, if kept in their own proper sphere, and made to co-operate with the family and the Church, become gracious helps to the one, and feeders to the other; and, in this way, they should be improved and encouraged. The abuse of a system is no argument against its proper use.

But, it may be added, that even allowing Sunday Schools to be ever so efficient as far as their operations extend, they are not sufficient to cover the whole ground of religious education. It is preposterous to suppose that one hour in the week spent in religious instruction, will answer the spiritual wants of the child, if it is to be subjected to the counteracting influences of mere worldly thought and feeling, during all the rest of the time. And, it is therefore evident, that so far as the education of the child is entrusted to any other hands than those of parents and faithful Sunday School teachers; it should of right be conducted in Christian schools, in which the spirit of piety would be infused into every educational operation—where the intellectual part of man would not be cultivated to the exclusion of, and, therefore, at the expense of, the best affections of the

heart. And it is to be hoped, that the day is not far distant, 'when schools will be established in all our various congregations, in which the Bible will not be regarded as contraband, or only tolerated without word or comment from the teacher, as in some of our State systems. The Church owes it to herself to establish schools in which the law will be 'the law of life and grace in Christ, and not merely the pamphlet laws of an ever-changing legislative body, administered by an ever-changing committee of directors.' And when this is done, the teacher will be no mere hireling of the State for a few months, but a functionary of the Church, whose piety will insure his usefulness—a teacher, who is not merely asked by a committee, 'Do you know science?' but one, whom the Saviour himself has asked, over, and over, and over again, 'Lovest thou me?' before he gave him the awfully solemn and responsible commission, 'Feed my lambs.' " *

There is no danger of pushing this matter too far. We are not afraid of claiming too much for our holy religion. The whole being of man is to be sanctified by it. The chief end of his existence is to glorify God. It is a libel against the high and holy destiny of man, to say that the great aim of his education is to fit him for the mere business transactions of this life. His highest interests lie beyond the fleeting things of time, and we cannot crowd the care of those interests into one hour in the week. Our life, as a whole, is a moment given to fit us for a glorious hereafter; and, in our education, the world must be secondary to religion—not religion secondary to the avocations of the world. And even looking at the matter with regard to ends of usefulness in mere time, it must be admitted that science, and art, and trade, are never so prosperous as when ennobled and sanctified by the religion of Jesus. "Godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come;" and if we "seek first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness, all things will be added unto us."

"It must be admitted, of course, that religious culture and

* Parochial Schools.

education may be conducted in such a manner as will make them irksome to children, and create a disrelish for these holy mysteries, which it will be hard afterwards to overcome. But if parents and teachers would present the truth intelligently, affectionately, attractively, and above all, prayerfully, there would be no reason to fear such results. The Holy Spirit is promised to them as their guide; and faithful instruction and action on their part would 'secure the first buddings of the plants of grace,' and pastors would only have to develop them, by appropriate cultivation, to 'trees of righteousness,' filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God."*

Thus, we repeat, the family and the school would become the nurseries of the Church. All infant members thus brought up, at a proper age, recognizing their relations, would gratefully and intelligently assume the responsibilities involved in their early consecration by their parents, and thus *the law of the increase and expansion of the Christian families, would become the law of the increase of the Christian Church.* "Piety, too, beginning in early life, would assume, progressively, lovelier and more influential forms of manifestation from generation to generation, so that the 'child would die a hundred years old.' The dew of youth, the strength of manhood, and the ripeness of age, would all be given to God and his cause."† Thus from the bosom of the Church would rise up many bright lights to show forth the glory of the Lord, and contend valiantly against the arch foes of our race. The few remaining allies of Satan would be brought back to God, and these taken from him, his kingdom would totter and fall; realizing the promise that the seed of the faithful should not only be as sands of the seashore, but also possess the gates of their enemies.

And we may be assured of this; that if the parents are careful to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord to train them in the way that they should go, when they get old *they will not depart from it.* We know that this

* Dr. Riddle on Organic Christianity. † *Ibid.*

is questioned by many. Declare this fact to some men, and they will shake their heads knowingly; and pointing to some case in which a man of apparent piety has a notoriously ungodly child, say, "It is contradicted by experience." In other words, they will say, "It is not true." Not true? Who says that it is true? *God*. God tell an untruth! Nay, let God be true, though every man a liar. It is true; as much so as anything else written in His blessed word.

"They struggle vainly to preserve a part
Who have not courage to contend for all."

And what is more, it is confirmed by the facts in the case, as an examination of genealogies in connection with religious statistics will show. Where this promise has not appeared to be verified the fault has always been with men and not with God. He always does His part, and it is an awful thing for us to palm the consequences of our ignorance or misdirected zeal upon the Almighty. If only men were true to their trust, the Divine fidelity would be illustrated in every case. He would fulfil the promise made to all the faithful when He said, "My Spirit which is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever."

This subject has an immense practical bearing. For since God has committed this important trust to Christian parents, and given them the means to perform their duty, and since He has pledged Himself so to crown their labors that their children will be established in the ways of the Lord, the truth must come home to them with stunning weight that their salvation depends almost entirely upon the fidelity with which they are nurtured in the Lord. Have men a realizing sense of this? Have they not been every where neglectful of the high interest committed to their care? If so, why should they be so longer? why when they bestow most worldly care upon a child's tenderest days,—when they take advantage of its earliest years to give it a secular education, and train it to habits of honesty, industry, and

frugality that it may take care of its worldly interests, why will they overlook these far higher interests? Why send their children forth from their thresholds laden with worldly goods and yet allow them to go down to eternal death with the seal of God's covenant upon their heads? Why suffer them to lie like so much dry drift wood along the stream of time, to be swept away by every rising wave of temptation, when they might by paternal fidelity be as living trees in the Lebanon of our God? He has made Christian parents the nurturers and guardians of a Divinely implanted life in their children and they are bound to nurture and guard it. He has placed them at a very Thermopylæ where they may by His grace defend it against the sins that come like Persian hosts against it, and if they forsake their post, or commit it to another, until all is lost, with them will rest the awful responsibility.

ART. VII.—FORMS OF PRAYER.

BY REV. J. S. FOULK, A. M., THIRD CHURCH, BALTIMORE, MD.

Extemporaneous or free prayer has become so common, that many are disposed to cry out against all forms of prayer, and to condemn their stated and regular use, as prescribed, in the Order of Worship, for the Service on the Lord's Day, as calculated to promote lifelessness and dulness in the devotional services of the sanctuary. Without examining the subject at all, and with no other guide but their own feelings, which are just as likely to be wrong as right, there are many who very magisterially pronounce all Liturgical worship as unscriptural, and suited only for such as have the form, but are destitute of the life and power of godliness. It is no uncommon thing to hear such declare, that a truly pious and devout worshipper would be chilled and frozen to death in such an atmosphere, and amid such formality. It is not to be wondered at, that persons habituated from childhood to the mode of worship, as it obtains

so generally in the sanctuaries of our Reformed Church, should denounce all liturgical forms as calculated to chain down the spirit, and prevent its upward rising to the throne of grace with that unction and importunate pleading, which belong only, as they contend, to extempore prayer. It is not to be wondered at, that with such antecedents, many should be ready to declare that sincerity and earnestness, and fervor and spirituality can exist only where the aspirations of the devout soul are left to ascend freely, and without attaching to them any clogs or weights in the shape of liturgical formularies. Prejudice has a powerful influence upon the mind, and thousands are thus blinded to the excellencies and advantages of united and common prayer, uttered by the voice of the whole congregation. We all know how soon habit becomes second nature. And whether we are willing to admit it or not, it is nevertheless so, that we are fully as much disposed to cling to, and most tenaciously to defend a religious habit, which has grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength, as we are to hold on to any other habit which we have been taught to look upon as right and good. It does not, therefore, excite our wonder, or fill us with the least surprise, that many such should be found indulging in bitter invective against all forms of prayer, and ridiculing their use as a mere mummerly of words, in which the heart is not engaged, or as crutches for ministers who lack the ability or the power to pray without them.

But invective is not argument, and ridicule is not the test of truth. How much better to admit with all candor and sincerity, with all forbearance and charity, that in this respect, as well as in others, there is such a thing as imbibing errors in infancy, and cherishing them in manhood, and even in declining age. Let us root out our prejudices and scatter them to the winds, and then come to the Holy Scriptures with a free and unbiassed mind, and we shall find forms of prayer scattered over the pages both of the Old and New Testament. The use of forms was sanctioned by God himself in the Jewish Church. He enjoined them upon the people, whom His own right hand

had redeemed from the house of bondage. Extemporaneous prayers were not so much as named, nor were they known among the Jews. All was form, and prescribed by God Himself. That the worship of the Temple was not celebrated in the unpremeditated or extemporaneous form, is evident from the direction given to the Levites "to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even," "according to the order commanded unto them" (2 Chron. xxiii. 30, 31). On one occasion David delivered a particular "psalm to thank the Lord, into the hand of Asaph and his brethren;" a psalm containing this petition, "Save us, O God of our salvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to Thy holy name and glory in Thy praise." And when it was repeated, "all the people said, Amen, and praised the Lord" (1 Chron. xvi. 35, 36). From the time of Moses to the period embraced in the ministry of Christ, all Scripture is decidedly in favor of the use of forms of prayer in the public worship of God. The Gospels do not furnish a single instance in which Christ objected to the liturgical services of the Synagogue and Temple. When His disciples, who as Jews had always been accustomed to forms of prayer, requested Him to teach them how to pray, He gave them that beautiful formulary, "Our Father who art in heaven." In the Acts of the Apostles, we find that they used forms. The conclusion, then, cannot be avoided that in rejecting them, and substituting an unpremeditated mode of worshiping God, we have followed our own fancy, and not the example of Christ and His Apostles. After examining this subject with all the candor and honesty we could summon, the conviction has fastened itself upon our mind, that *in the light of Apostolic example, and the custom of the Church in its best and purest ages*, this mode of conducting the devotions of God's people cannot be defended. An attempt has been made to do this by Timothy Dwight and a host of kindred spirits, but they have most signally failed. With minds full of prejudice for all forms, and contempt for the very name of liturgy, with minds as firmly wedded to the idea that free prayer was the most scriptural, as they were to

their rigid and soul-freezing systems of Theology, they were wholly incapacitated to determine the true character of Apostolic prayer. They ignored the fact, that forms of prayer were used in the Jewish Temple and Synagogue, that this particular feature was transferred to the Christian Church when Christ gave His disciples that Pattern-prayer, and said: "*After this manner, therefore, pray ye.*" Although Christ kept up a striking resemblance of the Christian to the Jewish Church, in the appointment of twelve Apostles answering to the twelve princes of the tribes of Israel, and in the institution of Baptism and the Lord's Supper answering to Circumcision and the Passover, yet upon this point they ignored any conformity to the ancient mode of worship. They ignored the strong testimony borne by the precomposed forms of Peter, and James, and Mark, which have come down to us, along with a commentary on the Liturgy ascribed to the Apostle James, written by Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, in the fourth century. They ignored the fact, which stands out so prominently on the pages of the New Testament, that the Apostles made use of forms in their joint devotions, and that some of the prayers they repeated "*with one accord*" have been preserved by the Holy Ghost for our instruction and imitation.

Immediately after the triumphant ascension of their Lord from the "Mount called Olivet," the Apostles returned to Jerusalem, and convened as a worshipping congregation in "an upper room," which was no doubt sufficiently private and retired to render them secure from the fury of those who had crucified their Master. Here "these all continued *with one accord* in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren." It is not said that Peter, or James, or John, or any of the other brethren, lifted up *his* voice, and prayed in the name of all. Whenever the Apostle preached the Gospel, then all voices were hushed, every eye was intently fixed upon, and every ear open to the words of the speaker. On the day of Pentecost, although all the Apostles were present, there is no such language as this employed in reference to the preaching. This was not *with*

one accord; they never united their voices in the delivery of sermons to the people. Then the inspired historian speaks in a different style, and says: "Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up *his* voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea," &c. And so, whenever the Apostles preached, no matter how many of them were present, one only is spoken of as imparting instruction, and the congregation is described as listening. And why this difference in the preaching and praying of the Apostles? Is there not something remarkable in the fact that whenever they engaged in devotional exercises, the plural pronoun should be used? Then it is no longer Peter, or Stephen, or Paul lifting up *his* voice and preaching Christ, but it is the whole congregation of believers lifting up *their* voices in prayer and supplication.

The expression "*with one accord*" is explained by Scripture itself, and is most incontrovertibly shown to be not merely a *unity in the matter*, as some would fain persuade themselves, but a *unity in the very form of prayer*. In Acts i. 24, 25, we read: "And *they* prayed and said;" then comes the form in which every voice united, "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two Thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas, by transgression, fell, that he might go to his own place." And to place the matter beyond all doubt, and convince the most skeptical that this was the usual custom of the primitive Church, we are told that when Peter and John had frustrated the design of the Jewish Sanhedrim, and had boldly asserted their determination to obey God rather than man, and to preach Christ and Him crucified, they again joined "their own company." And when this company of believers had heard the report of "all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them," what did they do? Did one of the Apostles, in the name of the company, offer up a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the deliverance of Peter and John from the fury of their adversaries? St. Luke tells us, that "when they heard that," they lifted up their voice to God *with one accord*, and said,—then comes the form in which they all joined audibly,

running through seven verses, and which the Holy Ghost has caused to be recorded,—“Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth,” &c. (Acts iv. 24–30.)

In all their public assemblies, it is recorded of the primitive Christians—*They lifted up their voice and prayed with one accord.* And if they were not in the habit of using a form of words, why should we have, at the very outset of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, two forms of prayer preserved, in the use of which every voice simultaneously united? Ah! we cannot escape the conclusion that God thus teaches us how blessed was the harmony and concord, and how beautiful and comely was the order, whenever the disciples approached Him in prayer and supplication. They did not trust to come into His dread presence—they had too little confidence in their own abilities—they were filled with too much of that humility and lowliness of heart, recommended by the Saviour, to take their position before the sovereign Ruler of heaven and earth, and address Him in solemn prayer, without a precomposed and premeditated form, couched in such language, and made up of such petitions, as the understanding and the heart approve, and upon which the affections can rise, on strong elastic wing, in their flight to the throne of grace.

With all the praises bestowed upon free and extemporaneous prayer, and with a full sense of its advantages in the present posture of the Protestant Church, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact, which experience and observation so fully attest, the tendency which it has to inflate men with a favorable and most exalted opinion of their talents in this direction, and to make them spiritually proud, boastful and uncharitable. We cannot conceal from ourselves the mournful fact, that even ministers of the Gospel, caring more for the admiration of men than the applause of God, sometimes strive in this very way to build up for themselves a reputation for brilliant ideas, and eloquent appeals to God. We cannot blot out from our memory what our ears have been so often pained to hear—the irreverent and blasphemous familiarity with which men approach God—the low and cant phraseology and hackneyed expressions employed

with such freezing and deadening formality—the “praying at” those who may have injured them with the tongue, or by their conduct, in disgusting and retaliatory style—and the preaching of which so many are guilty, when they expatiate upon the doctrinal articles of our holy religion, or the institutions and obligations of Christianity. From all such and other evils which might be specified, and which are the bitter fruits of leaving men to follow the thoughts and inclinations of their own hearts in public prayer, we have need to humble ourselves in the very dust, and to cry out in the words of the Litany, “Good Lord, deliver us.” And these evils loudly admonish us of the necessity of returning to the *old paths*—the paths trodden by the Apostles and a countless multitude now before the throne of God. No matter what may be our views and feelings in reference to this matter, one thing is certain, if we have no heart to pray with such words as the Holy Ghost teaches, or with such petitions as eminently pious and devout men of the early Church clothed the aspirations of their souls when they drew near the Mercy Seat, we can have no heart to lift up our affections to God with words of our own.

But to return to the forms of prayer, used on the two occasions referred to by the Apostles. These must have been previously made known and explained to the assemblies. In no other way can we account for the vocal union and agreement, unless we ascribe it to the immediate interposition of the Holy Spirit, and this would only enhance the value of the authority in favor of forms. It would only prove that upon sudden and unprepared emergencies, they were miraculously furnished with suitable forms by the intervention of the Almighty Himself. In whatever way this symphony and unanimity in prayer was brought about, it is quite certain that “*they said*” the same words, and must therefore have been familiar with the form. In their *public* devotions they did not pray extemporaneously—on the spur of the moment—uttering whatever came uppermost. This was not the case in the Jewish Church. And there is not a syllable of authority from the great Founder of the Christian Church to show, that He changed the mode of

prayer, but on the contrary there is both precept and example to enforce it.

The disciples came to Jesus and said: "*Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples.*" The greatest prophet that was born of a woman prepared a form for His disciples, and we have here the authority of the Baptist quoted, and employed as an argument with the Saviour for furnishing those whom He had called to follow Him with a devotional formulary. How easy would it have been to express His disapprobation, and to counsel His disciples against the use of forms! How easy would it have been to tell them, that they must pray extemporaneously—that their petitions must come warm and glowing from the heart! If in that formal age of the Jewish Church, when all their devotional services were dull and lifeless, and destitute of fervor and unction, not a word of condemnation fell from the lips of the Son of God as to the use of precomposed forms, certainly we ought not to be harsh in our judgment, and condemn such worship as our Revised Liturgy prescribes, lest perchance we should be found fighting against God.

The worship of the ancient Temple was liturgical, and so was also that of the Synagogue. The Saviour by His frequent visits to these places, countenanced and sanctioned this mode, and He doubtless took part in the devotions of God's people, and thus used with them their prescribed forms. And the Apostles imitated the example of their Lord, and frequently repaired to Jewish places of worship. In Acts iii. 1, we are told that "Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer."

While the Saviour reprov'd the Jews for their hypocrisy and wickedness, He never objected to their written forms of prayer. And when His disciples requested such a formulary, He readily responded, and gave them the most simple, beautiful, and comprehensive prayer the world has ever seen. On all occasions when they came together, we believe that the disciples and the early Christians made use of this model-form. With it they were all familiar, and could therefore lift up their voices, and

unite in the repetition *with one accord*. It would require a miracle to convince us, that these holy men disregarded the express command of the Master:—"After this manner, therefore,"—in the use of this form,—"*pray ye*." We are well aware, that a different sense is put into these words by anti-liturgical commentators. But we prefer deriving our authority from the early Church. Tertullian, Cyprian, Augustine, and others, put the construction just named upon these words. Cyprian says: "Christ himself gave us a form of prayer, and *commanded us to use it*, because when we speak to the Father in the Son's words, we shall be more easily heard."

"In doubtful questions 'tis the safest way,
To learn what unsuspected ancients say,
For 'tis not likely we should higher soar
In search of heaven than all the Church before."—DRYDEN.

Could all our congregations be induced to trample their prejudices in the dust, and follow the example of the primitive Christians so far as to lift up their voices *with one accord* in the repetition of the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer along with the minister, and to follow his petitions at proper intervals with the loud and hearty AMEN! it would not be long before they would be prepared to adopt a full liturgical service. And in such a service they would feel that the true idea of worship was realized, and that prayer was best performed when addressed to God according to the theory and spirit, which pervade and animate the Lord's Prayer, made up as it is of worship, petition, ascription and doxology.

"There is a joy, which angels well may prize;
To see, and hear, and aid God's worship, when
Unnumber'd tongues, a host of Christian men,
Youths, matrons, maidens, join. Their sounds arise
'Like many waters:' now glad symphonies
Of thanks and glory to our God; and then
Seal of the social prayer, the loud Amen!
Faith's common pledge: Contrition's mingled cries.
Thus when the Church of Christ was hale and young,
She call'd on God, one spirit and one voice:
Thus from corruption cleans'd, with health new strung
Her sons she nurtur'd. O, be theirs the choice,
What duty bids, to worship heart and tongue,
At once to pray, at once in God rejoice."—MANT.

For this unanimity in the public devotions of the sanctuary, we have a number of precepts. Our Saviour makes a vocal union and agreement in prayer necessary to our success at a throne of grace. "If two of you shall AGREE on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." The word translated "agree" is much stronger in the original Greek. It is *συμφωνήσωσιν* compounded of *συν*, together, and *φωνή*, voice. The English word *symphony*, which is derived from this, expresses the idea. The passage, then, should read thus: If two of you speak together—symphonize or lift up the voice together—as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. This precept of the Son of God, in connection with the form He gave His disciples, and His own uniform attendance on the ritual services of the Jewish Synagogue, present a formidable array of evidence in favor of liturgical worship. They constitute a three-fold cord, which cannot be broken.

The example of Christ and the Apostles, and all their teachings, if they are worth anything at all in determining so important a question, plainly show that the sacred offices of religion—the prayer, the praises, the confessions and the thanksgivings, were to be fixed and prescribed, and not left to every man's private will and fancy to make and alter as he pleased. This point we conceive to be as evident as the day, and as clear as the sun in the heavens. On no other supposition or principle could St. Paul have admonished the Romans in language like this,—“That ye may *with one mind and one mouth* glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” On no other principle could he have exhorted the Corinthians to “speak all the same things,” and “be perfectly joined together in the same mind,” so that the unlearned might be able to utter the familiar “*Amen*” at their “giving of thanks.” On no other principle could believers in the days of St. Paul have joined him in his own declaration,—“I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also. I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.”

While they prayed and sang with the spirit, with warmth and earnestness, they took care to do it with a "form of sound words," such as Timothy was exhorted to hold fast,—with a clear understanding of every word they uttered. We have the unanimous testimony of all antiquity, that the Apostles and primitive Christians were not more addicted to singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord with precomposed "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," than they were to supplicate God's mercy and forgiveness, His grace and heavenly benediction, with precomposed prayers. The Fathers continually allude to this feature of divine worship. Irenæus who was the disciple of Polycarp, the friend of St. John—and Tertullian, who labored in distant Africa, within seventy years of the Apostles, speak of it. In their writings there is no evidence that public worship was conducted in any other way. They speak of liturgical worship as having been observed from the beginning. We might as well doubt, that there were such men as Justin Martyr, who speaks of "common prayer," and Origen, who speaks of "constituted prayers," as entertain a doubt that when believers prayed in the days of the Apostles, as well as afterwards, they prayed *not only* with the spirit, *but with the understanding also*,—in a form of words upon which the mind had been enabled to exercise its judgment. And this mode of worship was never intermitted until Puritanism reared its head in the Church.

Our position is simply this, nothing more nor less, that when the disciples prayed in their joint capacity, they offered *premeditated prayers*, just as when they sang God's praises, they tuned their voices, and all *with one accord* joined in the words of a precomposed form. We do not take the ground, that they had a full and complete liturgy, from which they read their prayers. We would just as soon think of contending for a full and complete Hymn Book, from which they selected a psalm or hymn suitable to the subject or occasion, and then united heart and voice in the high praises of their Saviour God. They had neither the one, nor the other, and yet in praise and prayer they made use of precomposed forms, just as they had done in the

synagogue and Temple before their conversion. In the modern acceptation they had no books in those days. It may not be a comfortable thought to many, but it is nevertheless so, that the objection so triumphantly urged against liturgies, based upon the admission we have made, that the prayers were not read, holds with equal force, and with the same crushing weight, against Hymn-Books. When our Lord, just before entering the Garden of Gethsemane, "sung an hymn" with His disciples, will any one assert, that they stood around Him with hymn-books, or even with manuscripts in their hands? When Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God in their dark prison chamber, they had neither a liturgy nor a hymn-book open before them, and had they been in possession of this modern convenience, so admirably adapted to the purposes of public worship, they could not have used them at the dead hour of midnight. Those who so strenuously oppose praying from the book, should also oppose singing from the book. There is no consistency,—all antiquity would repudiate the idea,—in holding the hymn-book in our hands, while with our feet we trample the liturgy in the dust beneath us. The Apostles used forms both in prayer and in praise. These were few and simple, but in process of time liturgies and hymn-books became necessary and were introduced, and thus the Church was provided, under the guidance and direction of her Great Head, with formularies for all her devotional and consecratory services. The New Testament does not in so many words command us to use liturgies;—*neither does it command us to use hymn-books, to build churches, or to baptize infants.* But as Christians have thrown themselves on the authority of the Old Testament in the erection of their churches, and the admission of children into Christ's kingdom, even so have they found it to edification to observe the same mode of worship which God prescribed for the Israelites. The New Testament most plainly settles the principle, and the example of both the Master and the household has established the great principle of liturgical worship.

As the Christian year with its three holy seasons of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost,—its first beginnings,—gradually

unfolded itself into the beautiful and systematic order as it now holds, with suitable Gospels and Epistles for each day, challenging the admiration of the Church and of the world, even so was it with Liturgies and Hymn-Books. In reference to pre-composed prayers and hymns, we can adopt the language of Dr. Nevin on the Christian Year, and say: "They do not necessarily appear at once in their completeness. They have a history, a genesis, through which they reveal themselves under various forms, rising from what may be considered their rude beginnings only, to that which constitutes at last their absolute consummation. Wide differences characterize these forms; but through all such differences they are still found to represent and express fundamentally the same idea of law. So much indeed is implied by the supposition of any real history in the case. The idea of precomposed forms both of prayer and of praise, is universal, a fact seated in the religious constitution of the world. Under all manifestations, accordingly, it is the same force always working in the same direction. Their different forms are but so many different stages, in the progress of which, they are carried forward to their true ideal perfection."

And what he says of the rejection of the order of services which the Church Year prescribes, will apply to the whole subject of liturgical worship: "Only since the Reformation has the attempt been made, not by Protestantism in general, but by a fragmentary section of Protestantism, to set aside the whole conception as a "relict of superstition," serving to encumber more than to assist the proper spirituality of Christian worship. But of what force can any such isolated judgment be, over against the united mind of the Church in all past centuries, backed as this is, at the same time, by the religious constitution of the world, and by its religious history also, in the most universal view. The exception is too violent, too monstrous, we may say, to stand."

Prior to the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland,—prior to the rise of Puritanism in England,—there is not a single instance on record of public worship being celebrated in any other way. This is a significant fact—a fact which de-

serves to be pondered by all who would set aside the forms of prayer with which the ancient Church worshiped God, for what in *their wisdom*, is deemed a more spiritual and excellent way. We may be unwilling to follow in its track, but certainly it requires a high degree of presumption and arrogance to regard the Church for sixteen centuries *as in the wrong*, and as rocking itself to sleep and to death in the *cradle of formality*. We cannot tell by whom the present mode of worship was introduced. But we do know that it was not done by the Reformer John Calvin. He was strenuously opposed to what was then universally regarded as an innovation. In a letter written to the Duke of Somerset, lord protector of England, in the year 1549, he says:—"I do highly approve, that there should be a certain form of prayer and ecclesiastical rites, from which it should not be lawful for the pastors themselves to discede. First, that provision may be made for some people's ignorance and unskilfulness. Second, that the concert of all churches amongst themselves may the more plainly appear. Third, that order may be taken against the desultory levity of such who delight in innovations. Thus there ought to be an established catechism, an established administration of sacrament, and also A PUBLIC FORM OF PRAYER (*publicam item precæ formulam*)."

Even Richard Baxter, author of the Saint's Everlasting Rest, Puritan as he was, could not find it in his heart to speak of forms of prayer in the contemptuous way that many, who claim to be actuated by his spirit, do in our day. He administered a most scathing rebuke to all uncharitable defamers of the sainted dead,—to all who exalt themselves above those whom they regard as mere *formalists*, cold as an iceberg, because they read their prayers from a book. He used these words: "Is it not a high degree of pride to conclude, that almost all Christ's Churches in the world, for these thirteen hundred years at least, to this day, have offered such worship unto God as that you are obliged to avoid it? And that almost all the Catholic Church on earth this day, is below your communion for using forms? And that even Calvin, and the

Presbyterians, Cartwright, Wildersham, and the old non-conformists, were unworthy of your communion?" Let these few quotations from the pages of history suffice. It would savor more of that religion, whose crowning glory it is,—that it clothes its followers with humility and lowliness of mind, were we to form a different estimate of those who regarded themselves as weak, and therefore in need of help,—who counted forms not as clogs and weights to the spiritual mind, but as bands in which they needed to be swathed about, to support their limbs in the walk of faith. And we would not lose either in spirituality or devoutness, were we as children to sit reverently and devoutly at their feet, and pay all deference to their opinions and practices.

" Might aught beside thine own inherent praise,
Thy stores adopted from heaven's treasury,
Mark'd with God's name and genuine imagery,
Win the charm'd soul to pass her earthly days
With thee, loved mother! 'tis that she surveys
In the long record of the times gone by,
What sweet memorials of a grace from high,
Shed on thy FAITHFUL SONG, her scroll displays.
Hail, holy men! by whom of yore was fought,
True to your CAPTAIN, to his Consort true,
The Christian Fight! The goal your footsteps sought,
Fain would I, following in your track pursue;
And fain my soul, her work of trial wrought,
Would find the haven of her rest with you!"—MANY.

When Christ abolished the covenant of works, He did not abolish all that was outward in its more spiritual successor. The mode of worship was lessened or changed,—new and more simple rites were given in the place of the old; but there were forms still. When He required a more spiritual worship, He remembered that our flesh must needs be exercised. He established a service in which the flesh and the spirit were to be actively employed and to move in unison. He did not merely give forms, for then the flesh only would be brought into subjection. He did not give merely grace, for that were to neglect the flesh, but he united forms and grace together. He breathed into the visible frame-work of outward service the breath of life. He desired to be served both with flesh and

spirit—not with the flesh without the spirit, nor yet with the spirit without the flesh. In the Covenant of Grace, He so arranged as to engage them both. And hence the Church has constructed all its liturgies in such a way as most considerately to employ both flesh and spirit. To reject forms of prayer as being contrary or derogatory to the spirituality of the Gospel service, as being relics of the bondage of the law, and restraints on Christian liberty, would require us, if we wish to be consistent, to set aside all forms, so that the spirit may not be tied down to any outward acts, and this would land us in Quakerism, and constitute us dumb worshippers—no praise, no prayer, no sacramental acts, or outward performances whatever.

In pleading for forms of prayer in the public worship of the sanctuary, it cannot but be evident to every unbiassed reader of the Scriptures and of Ecclesiastical History, that we are vindicating what prophets and apostles, with Christ our Saviour, have practiced, and what primitive Christians and their successors to the sixteenth century were unanimous in adopting. Though it may not accord with the maxims of worldly popularity, or harmonize with the prejudices of many, we prefer bowing to the teachings of the Holy Ghost, and of the Holy Catholic Church. Our motto is:—"Let God be true and every man a liar." "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

True to the principles and practices of the Church as she has stood for centuries, and to which she adhered in her best and purest ages, the founders of the Reformed Church in the Palatinate prescribed an order of service for the Lord's Day, that included liturgical forms of prayer, ending with the Lord's Prayer, *both before and after the sermon*. The Church of the Heidelberg Catechism, in its own home, was liturgical. Of this the old Palatinate Liturgy furnishes incontestable proof. We do not here refer to the Dutch Palatinate Liturgy, published in this country, which omitted much, and added some things that did not belong to it. We refer to the *Kirchen*

Ordnung, prepared for the Reformed Church under Frederick III. in 1563, and which was afterwards amended and improved under the prince, John Casimer, in 1585. A reprint of the edition, published in 1684, was brought to this country by one of the fathers of our Church, the sainted Nicholas Pomp, and is now in the possession of the Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, D. D. Long and sacredly may this copy be preserved, to tell to future generations that our Church was originally conformed to the teachings and practices of the Apostles, and of the entire household of faith as she had existed previously. It cannot be denied, that we have forsaken the landmarks which our fathers have set, and been sent adrift from our ancient moorings. Though many may congratulate themselves, that we have abandoned our *ritualistic forms*, as they are pleased to term them, and thrown off the "rag of popery" which our fathers put on us, yet there are many others whose feelings would rather prompt them to exclaim—ICHABOD, "The glory is departed from Israel." Yes, there are many, in whose bosoms sentiments of love and respect and veneration for our Church are engendered, as they transfer themselves to her birth-place and original home, and in company with those who then lived and labored at her altars, "walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces." But when they come to tell it to the generations following, "they would fain hang their harps upon the willows and weep, when they remember Zion," departing from the old paths, giving up its liturgical forms, time-honored, full of power, wisdom, and the piety of all ages, and leaving nothing to protect the devotions of the people, to-day, from the strange fire that a heated imagination would bring to the altar, and to-morrow, from the cold nothings which would be offered up upon it.

From the Hessian Agenda, 1657, we learn, that all the services, in the Churches of the Palatinate, before the sermon, took place at the altar, and not in the pulpit. Here again there has been a falling away from the custom of our fathers. One innovation has paved the way for the introduction of

another and another, until a complete revolution was effected in the mode of worship. Along with our abandonment of liturgical forms, the altar-service was given up—nay more, in many instances our altars were “hewn down,” and tables placed in their stead. We think it is meet and right, that the spiritual sacrifices of broken and contrite hearts should be offered up, as in days of yore, by the entire priesthood of believers, the minister, as the priest of the congregation, officiating at the altar. Ought he not, before he ascends the pulpit, to stand on the same level with the people, and with them lie low in the dust before God in the confession of sin and the supplication of mercy? Is it not more proper, more in accordance with the idea, as it has always ruled in the Church of the living God, that the devotional services should be conducted at the altar, and that the minister should not enter the pulpit until, in his prophetic character, he takes his stand before the people to instruct them in the mysteries of the Kingdom of God? Nay, is it not the *only proper place* for the priest of the Lord to stand, when he offers to God the spiritual sacrifices of his people? So our Reformed Fathers thought, and so rigidly did they adhere to the idea, that all the duties of the minister performed by him as the priest of the congregation should take place at the altar, as the *proper place* for all such services, that in the Hessian Agenda, already referred to, he was required to descend from the pulpit after the sermon and offer the closing prayer from the Liturgy, and pronounce the benediction at the altar. All honor to those who are striving to reinstate the order for divine services *prescribed by our forefathers*, and to restore practices and customs which, ever since the rise of Puritanism, have gradually been laid aside, and for some generations have become obsolete! and may God hasten the time when ministers and people, with one accord, shall say, Amen!

The pulpit has become the object of attraction—with too many in our Protestant churches the sermon is every thing, and preach—preach—preach—is the everlasting cry. The great mass wend their way to the *House of Preaching* to hear

the sermon, to look up to the pulpit and listen to beautiful and eloquent prayers, just as they do to the sermon. All the praying must be done by proxy. The true idea of worship has been lost sight of. "My house shall be called the *House of Prayer* for all people." It is high time, that the devotional services should occupy the chief place in our sanctuaries, that we should be able to say with St. Paul, "We have an Altar," and that the people should come up to the house of the Lord to pray and praise, as well as hear. It is high time that the altar should be made to occupy a prominent position in front of the pulpit, to remind all who enter the gates of Zion, that prayer is what God requires of all who worship there, and that all may have continually before their eyes an emblem of sacrifice, a type of "things in the heavens," the sweet, holy, joyful place of intercession and prayer. In the language of another, we say, "Give back, thou man of Rome, the cup to a thirsty flock; give back, ye who have forsaken the ancient landmarks, the liturgy to a congregation of dumb worshippers. Let not the cup of blessing be drunk by proxy; let not the great duty of worship by proxy be performed!" And to this we would also add, give back the altar, that when the people go up to the house of God,—they may be able to adopt the language of the Psalmist: "So will I compass thine altar, O Lord: That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works." "Let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to the tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy."

If we would have our church-service conformed to the service of the Mount Zion above, the New Jerusalem, then let us set up the landmarks, and return to the "old paths where is the good way and walk therein." The worship of the Church triumphant is liturgical. Responses are uttered there by ten thousand times ten thousand voices, like the voice of many waters. The lips of the blood-washed throng are not sealed in heaven, and why should not the services of the Church militant be conducted in the same responsive and symphonious way? "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man

could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and *cried with a loud voice*, saying: Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb." And then comes the RESPONSE, rising in full swell and solemn cadence before the throne of God. "And all the angels stood round about the throne, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God, saying Amen—Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen." Why should not the saints on earth follow this glorious order of worship? And then think of the *forms* which, according to St. John, in his Apocalyptic vision, the heavenly hosts daily employ, and let the cheeks of all who object to the use of the forms prescribed by our Liturgy, on account of their sameness, in the services of God's earthly courts, mantle with shame; and let them seriously consider whether the fault does not lie in themselves, that they become, as they complain, so intolerably lifeless and dull. This objection carries with it no weight whatever. *It never comes from those who are accustomed to the use of liturgies.* And if our feelings were right, we would love to unite, *with one accord*, in the repetition of the same forms of prayer, just as we unite, with one accord, in singing God's praises, and never grow tired of repeating the same words in the beautiful and soul-inspiring hymns:

"Alas, and did my Saviour bleed," &c.

"When I can read my title clear," &c.

"Jesus, lover of my soul," &c.

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," &c.

"I love Thy Kingdom, Lord," &c.

Ah! unless our feelings and sentiments undergo a radical change, and our bitter prejudices be scattered to the winds, will not heaven be to us a place full of formality and dullness? There the saints, *with one accord*, will join—everlastingly join in the repetition of those memorable FORMS: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom,

and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." And again—

"Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power,
Be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne,
And unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

In the language of another, we may say most truthfully: "We have only to compare the modern form and usages of church worship, with the responses and Amen service of the Liturgy, its Angelic and Cherubic Hymns, its Therefore with Angels and Archangels, its Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, alongside of the above inspired description, in order to see which is the most like the church-service of the Apocalypse."

And here at this point we shall introduce a remarkable testimony to the thrilling and powerful effect of liturgical worship—*remarkable*, because it is given by a man, whom of all others we should regard as least susceptible of such impressions. The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, of Brooklyn, wrote from Scotland as follows:

"I cannot tell you how much I was affected; I had never had such a trance of worship, and I shall never have such another view until I gain the gate. I am so ignorant of the church-service that I cannot tell the various parts by their right names—but the portions which most affected me were the prayers and responses which the choir sang. I had never heard any part of a supplication—a direct prayer—sung by a choir; and it seemed as though I heard, not with my ear, but with my soul. I was dissolved—my whole being seemed to me like an incense wafted gratefully towards God. The Divine presence rose before me in wondrous majesty, but of ineffable gentleness and goodness; and I could not stay away from more familiar approach, but seemed irresistibly, yet gently, drawn toward God. My soul, then, thou didst magnify the Lord, and rejoice in the God of thy salvation! And then came to my mind the many exaltations of the Psalms of David; and never before were the expressions and figures so noble, and so

-necessary, to express what I felt. I had risen, it seemed to me, so high, that I was where David was when his soul conceived the things which he wrote. Throughout the service, and it was an hour and a quarter long, whenever an 'Amen' occurred, it was given by the choir, accompanied by the organ and the congregation. Oh, that swell and solemn cadence yet ring in my ear. Not once, not a single time did it occur in that service, from beginning to end, without bringing tears from my eyes. I stood like a shrub in a spring morning—every leaf covered with dew, and every breeze shook down some drops. I trembled so much at times that I was obliged to sit down. Oh, when in the prayers, breathed forth in strains of sweet, simple, solemn music, the love of Christ was recognized, how I longed then to give utterance to what that love seemed to me. There was a moment in which the heavens seemed open to me, and I saw the glory of God! All the earth seemed to me a storehouse of images, made to set forth the Redeemer, and I could scarcely keep still from crying out. I never knew, I never dreamed before, of what heart there was in the word *Amen*. Every time it swelled forth and died away solemnly, not my lips, not my mind, but my whole being said—Saviour, so let it be."

And like this Puritan divine, many others, despite of their training and a different habit of worship, have felt themselves irresistibly drawn towards the Liturgy, and fascinated by the beauty and simplicity of its forms. The Rev. John Cumming, D.D., a Scottish Presbyterian, says: "I shall never forget how thrilling I felt one clause in the Liturgy. It is perhaps the first sentence and the sweetest prayer in the language: In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death and in the day of judgment, Good Lord, deliver us."

Dr. Doddridge, the Presbyterian Commentator, says: "The language is so plain as to be level to the capacity of the meanest, and yet the sense is so noble, as to raise the capacity of the highest."

Watson, the author of the *Theological Institutes*, a Metho-

dist of high repute, exclaimed on the borders of the grave, and just before resigning his spirit into the hands of his blessed Redeemer—"Read the *Te Deum*; it seems to unite one in spirit, with the whole Catholic Church on earth and in heaven."

Richard Baxter sought the consolations of the English Liturgy in the hour of death, and it does not therefore excite our wonder that he should thus express himself,—“The constant disuse of forms is apt to breed giddiness in religion, and to make men hypocrites, who shall delude themselves with conceits that they delight in God, when it is but in those novelties and varieties of expression that they are delighted; and therefore I advise forms to fix Christians, and to make them sound.”

The Rev. Flavel S. Mines, who was reared in the Presbyterian Church and ministered among that people, but afterwards became a minister of the Episcopal Church, says of the Book of Common Prayer,—“Like the Bible, it is a study for the learned, and yet giveth wisdom to the simple. Its language is, in part, literally the language of angels, and is yet within the comprehension of infants. It is a sun that will blind the gaze of the philosopher, but yet giveth light to the greatest and the least in the kingdom of heaven. It is an atmosphere full of wonders to the spiritual chemist, but feeding alike the life of the wise and the unwise. Its alleluiahs are the alleluiahs of the Cherubim and Seraphim; its hosannas, the hosannas in which babes and sucklings perfect and echo back the praise. We think with Robert Hall, that its simplicity is its majesty. All this we should not dare to say of a mere human composition. But the Liturgy is not a human composition; nineteen twentieths of its language are taken, line by line and word for word, from that volume which has the mysterious power to chain the understanding of a patriarch, and to charm the heart of a child. A Gabriel may desire to look into its pages; a Timothy may lispen them at his mother's knee.”

All these testimonies will apply to the Order of Worship for the Reformed Church. For this contains all the forms upon which so much praise is bestowed, and deservedly so. We have not taken them from the Book of Common Prayer. They

were taken from liturgies which had been used for centuries and belonged to us as a denomination, by priority of claim, before the compilation of the English Liturgy by Cranmer and others, under the royal auspices of Edward VI. It is a well established historical fact, that theologians from the Continent, who did not recognize Episcopacy, had a hand in forming the Book of Common Prayer. The forms collected together in our Order of Worship, are the inheritance of the Christian past, and come down to us hoary with age, and venerable for the piety which breathes in every line—in every word. With all our heart we adopt the testimony which a mighty host of the most pious and devout men upon whom the Sun of Righteousness has risen with healing in his wings, since the days of the Apostles, have given utterance to, and which may be thus condensed: "Blame us not if we value our Liturgy; it embodies the anthems of Saints; it thrills the heart with the dying songs of the faithful; it is hallowed with the blood of the martyrs; it glows with sacred fire."

We have referred to the position, which the Reformed Church in the Palatinate occupied, in reference to the subject of liturgical worship immediately after the Reformation. No one fact in history is susceptible of stronger proof, than the use of pre-composed forms of prayer in the Lord's Day service, both before and after the sermon, in the Church of the Heidelberg Catechism. No other public worship obtained for many—many years; and in the use of these liturgical forms, thousands and tens of thousands grew eminently ripe for heaven. And it was not until Puritanism proclaimed a *better mode*! of worshipping God, that the Reformed Church was drawn aside from the cultus of her founders, and fathers. She did not at once abandon the use of the Liturgy, in her transplantation to the New world. Only as a foreign and spiritualistic element infused itself, was she gradually drawn away from the "old paths," until at last the altar service was given up, and with it the ancient mode of praying to God and praising Him, as did the Church when Irenæus, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Origen, and Tertullian, beheld the glory, and the noble army of her martyrs

died for her, as the spouse of Jesus Christ. As the departure from liturgical worship, and the introduction of extemporaneous prayers did not take place at once, but was the work of time, so her return to the time-honored forms of worship, which have fallen into disuse, and even into oblivion, must in the very nature of the case be gradual and by slow degrees. It is far easier in a case like this to retrograde than to advance and regain the lost position.

Though the Church in her German home was originally liturgical, and though it is felt and admitted by many of her sons, that her worship should resemble the worship, as it is carried forward in the heavenly sanctuary, as closely as the difference of circumstances will admit, yet we are not rashly to change the order of service to which the people are now accustomed. We are not, by any imprudence or misconduct on our part, to wound the body of Christ. It is not to be expected, that those who have all their life been taught to worship God in a free, extempore way, should submit to a strictly liturgical church-service without opposition. Habit soon becomes second nature. Prejudices once excited are hard to crush and remove. It is, therefore, necessary to move cautiously—to pursue such a course as will not rend the body of Christ, and jeopardize the interests of souls, for whom He died. In a matter of this kind, contemplating as it does an entire revolution in the devotional services, to which they have been accustomed from infancy, we must observe the cautionary precept of our blessed Saviour: "Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves." The Apostle Paul lays down the principle by which we are to be governed in such matters: "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient." Prudence and a desire to promote, rather than retard the cause of Him, who has made us overseers of the flock committed to our care, forbid that we should do any thing calculated, as the forcible introduction of forms of prayer would be, "*to sin against the brethren and wound their weak conscience.*" To do so, regardless of the feelings of our members, hallowed and strengthened as they have been by many sacred associations, and happy hours spent in the sanctuary under the

form of worship, which for years has been universally prevalent in our churches, would be most assuredly to "*sin against Christ.*" Our solemn duty, under all the circumstances, is to pursue such a course for the attainment of the much desired end, as will not trample upon the feelings of those, who, with all their inability to see eye to eye with us in matters pertaining to the services of God's house, are as "dear to him as the apple of His eye, and are graven on the palms of His hands."

Poetry
We may not impose the forms of the Order of Worship without the consent of the people. For this they must be prepared by cultivating in them a liturgical spirit. There must be in ordinary circumstances not only a taste, but an educated and cultivated taste, to appreciate beauty in a landscape, grace in a statue, refinement in manners, elegance in literature, force in eloquence, melody in music, purity in morals, and to come to the point in hand, perfection in worship. Time must be given, and proper efforts put forth to correct and adapt the taste. It is impossible to rise at a bound, or by a single effort to the dignity of a Liturgy, which to be adequately admired requires a spirit in sympathy with its forms, and an order of piety which finds its highest and happiest strains of devotion in its fixed channels. The people must be educated and prepared to regard forms of prayer in precisely the same light, in which they look upon familiar psalms and hymns, and good old tunes, such as Old Hundred, Wells, Saint Martin's, Mear, &c., of which the ear, the lips, and the heart never grow weary. There are times when those, who are most bitterly opposed to the "*everlasting repetition,*" as it is termed, of the same words, acknowledge their force and their power in kindling devotion, and giving pinions to the affections and desires in their upward flight to the throne of grace. Some eight years ago, the Rev. Mr. Guinness, of England, visited this country, and electrified the people by his earnest, plain, and fervent style of preaching. He was called upon to preach to a congregation in Philadelphia, and when he entered the church, the choir executed an anthem which he regarded as altogether inappropriate to the time and the occasion. He rose, as soon as the

choir sat down, and stated: "I have come down here to-night to speak a few words with such as are anxious about the salvation of their souls; *that* which we have just heard was enough to drive away every solemn impression or serious thought." He then demanded that good, plain, old tunes should be sung, and hymns with which all were familiar, and at once gave out the beautiful hymn:

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plung'd beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains."

Why is it that, in *protracted meetings*, recourse should be had to familiar hymns and tunes—that these should be sung for weeks and months together—and that every voice should join in the same words without growing weary, and the heart robbed of every devotional feeling by the *everlasting repetition*? Who does not know that a new tune or a new hymn daily resorted to for *variety*, would *kill a revival in one week*? Away, then, with the objection that forms impose too great a restraint upon a free spirit, and are fit only to be recited by the lukewarm and indifferent! The course pursued by those who denounce forms, conclusively shows, that the devotional feelings are best excited when, like the cries of Jesus in the garden, they are constantly "in the same words." If the same hymns and spiritual songs can be used again and again in praising God, why cannot the same forms be used again and again in praying to Him? Is it not preposterous in the extreme to make any distinction between prayer and praise? The one is not a whit more solemn than the other. The one does not require less care in the selection of suitable words to address the God, who has declared that He will not be mocked, and who abhors all idle words and vain repetitions, than the other. How strangely inconsistent to cavil at written forms of prayer, when they are largely made up of inspired language, and contain the devout breathings of holy men who lived centuries ago, and yet make use of prepared hymns in praising God, against the sentiments of some of which very serious objections could with propriety

be urged! Surely, if God loathes and detests a form in the one case, he must loathe and detest it in the other! What is true in praise holds equally good in prayer. It is the education of the people, that stands in the way of admitting this, and blinds their eyes to the excellency and power of the same words in prayer, pronounced with one heart and voice by the whole congregation.

Why is it, that we never grow weary of the forms of prayer, which we were taught to lisp at a fond mother's knee? Why is it, that familiarity in this case does not breed disgust, and their constant repetition become offensive and odious? It is related of that great statesman, John Quincy Adams, that he never retired to rest at night without repeating the verse taught him by his mother:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

As in praise, so in prayer, there are no words so full of sweetness and pious unction to the soul as those with which we are most familiar, and which have proved channels of devotion to myriads, who have exchanged the forms used in the temple below for the higher and more enrapturing forms of the temple above. Our spiritual necessities are always the same, and why should there be any necessity of invoking God in ever new and changing prayers? Let the pulpit speak out—give the people light—show them the inconsistency of using forms in praise, and clinging most tenaciously to hymns and tunes, with which they are most familiar, and the rejection of forms of prayer, as though *mutability* here were the very perfection of devotion. To do this may require much labor and patient perseverance. But though it may cost "line upon line, here a little and there a little," though it may be attended with no small amount of tribulation, this is the first thing that must be done. Without this cultivated taste, without a liturgical spirit, forms, could they even be imposed, would be of no value.

Upon the ministry this work devolves, and by a bold and fearless independence they can accomplish much. What the people want, and what they must have before there can be a setting up of the ancient landmarks, is *light*. Let the ministry speak out earnestly and candidly on the great question. If the educational influences, to which the members of our Reformed Zion have all their lives been subjected, constitute a barrier to the introduction of liturgical worship, then let every minister, who is not in heart opposed to it, do all in his power to prepare the way—to make rough places smooth and crooked things straight. Let the people be instructed as to the practice of Christ and His Apostles, the position of the primitive Christians, of the Catholic Church for sixteen centuries, and of the Reformers. Let this be done with resolution, and yet with all prudence, and the people will suffer themselves to be led step by step into the old paths. We have no faith in the driving process. And every effort to force the liturgy upon the people, *nolens volens*, will be indignantly repelled. Let then the pulpit spread before the people all the facts that have a bearing upon this question, and point out the advantages of liturgical worship over that which now prevails, and before many years, nay, in the case of many of our congregations, a very short time would suffice to open the way for the restoration of the primitive and ancient mode of *congregational* worship, in which all the people can “lift up their voice to God with one accord” along with the minister.

And until the way is fully open for this introduction of forms of prayer, and their stated and regular use by the people, until the system of praying by proxy is abandoned, and the privileges of lay-worship restored, let those who are called to lead the devotions of the sanctuary imitate the example of the Apostles in the use of precomposed and premeditated formularies. It is no easy matter to lead in public prayer with profit and edification. It is all-important when the minister takes his stand between God and his spiritual priesthood, to present unto Him their spiritual sacrifices, that he should do it in acceptable words. God says: “Be not rash with thy mouth and let not

thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore, let thy words be few." Does this look as if God sanctioned that kind of prayer, which is made up of words rising unadvisedly in the mind—which are the offspring of the moment—and which often convey ideas and principles as unfit for God to hear as for man to utter? And yet how many contemptuously sneer at all forms of prayer, and rush at a moment's warning into the dread presence of God, and pray as confidently as if they had premeditated for hours the most solemn performance in which we are ever employed! How often do such prayers, by their length and weariness, quench the spirit of devotion! Whitefield, after listening to such a prayer, once said: "Brother, you prayed me into a good frame, and you prayed me out of it again."

If we are not to preach to our fellow-men without previous preparation, then why pray to God without previous thought and reflection? Is previous thought necessary in our addresses to man, but wholly unnecessary in our supplications to God? When we come into the dread presence of God to be the mouth of His people, we should have a clear understanding of every word we are about to utter; every petition should have been previously framed and cautiously examined, so that we may utter nothing but what our heads approve and our hearts are desirous to adopt. We have no right to approach God with vain repetitions. It is our duty to come before Him with suitable preparation. And we should so lead the devotions, the formula should be such, that the people may understand the order or method to be pursued, and unite their hearts with us in adoration, confession, supplication, intercession and thanksgiving.

There are those who would lift up their hands in holy horror at the very idea of such preparation for public prayer as we now advocate. They would at once declaim with wonderful loquacity and *pious fervor* against all such forms. And yet, when you analyze the prayers of those who seem to be so terribly afraid of forms, what are they in reality but *forms*? With the speaker they may indeed be unpremeditated; but no

one can listen to them Sunday after Sunday, without hearing the same stereotyped expressions—in substance the same prayer, with but little variation. There is such a thing, then, as being unconsciously, but most slavishly bound to a form, and yet all the while be railing against forms. The truth is, there can be no public prayer without a form. The only question is as to the best form. The reading of prayers on every Lord's Day might not, where prejudices are strong and inveterate, be to edification. What we contend for is a thorough preparation for this duty. We are bound to prepare as fully for our approaches to God in solemn prayer, as we are bound to prepare for the instruction of the people in sound doctrine. Though many may cavil at forms, or worship Him with forms which they ignorantly persuade themselves are no forms, let us obey the command of God, who says: "*Take with you words.*" Let us seek to make ourselves as familiar with every petition of which our prayer is to be composed, as is the nature of the spiritual wants they are intended to supply.

But while we advise the use of precomposed and premeditated forms of prayer, so that all extravagances and improprieties of sentiment and language may be excluded which destroy the dignity, solemnity and fervor of public worship, the true idea of worship can never be fully realized so long as a whole congregation stand with sealed lips and listen to the minister confessing their sins, supplicating forgiveness, and invoking upon them the divine blessing. One of the great excellencies in prescribed forms of prayer is, that *they unite the congregation with the minister in the performance of the service.* In the mode of worship now so generally prevalent, the congregation do not audibly unite in the public service so much as even to say "Amen" to the prayers offered up in their behalf. The bright throngs in the heavenly sanctuary are not thus *silent.*

There, St. John tells us, the elders, and saints, and angels stand before the throne, and lift up their hearts and voices in *responsive* worship. One saint or angel is not represented as performing by proxy that which is the right and the privilege

of each and all the rest. How much more would the Church's worship on earth resemble that of the heavenly hosts, and how much more rational, interesting and edifying would such worship be, were minister and people to prostrate themselves before the throne of grace in contrite confession of their sins; were they unitedly to rehearse their belief in the great truths of their common salvation; were they to invoke by alternate supplications the Divine favor and blessing, and in responsive hymns recount the praises of their God and Saviour.

There are certain practices which we have approved and adopted, that cannot be supported with the same amount of scriptural evidence. I refer to the religious observance of the Lord's Day, that is, the first day of the week, instead of the seventh, enjoined in the Old Testament, and the giving of Holy Baptism to infants. How men can produce their authority for these practices by quoting the declarations of the fathers, and appealing to the custom of the early Church, and yet stultify themselves by opposing liturgical worship, which can produce in its favor not only the voice of the entire Church for centuries, but proofs *positive, direct, and incontrovertible*, from the New Testament, is passing strange! It would be interesting to pursue the line of argument adopted in defence of the observance of the Lord's Day and Infant Baptism, and show how powerfully and overwhelmingly the very same course of argumentation would plead for liturgical worship—for precomposed forms both in prayer and in praise. In some things men are faithful to the very letter in observing the injunction of the Apostle: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the *traditions* which ye have been taught, whether by *word* (of men) or our Epistle." But in other things, even the voice of Scripture and tradition combined, fails to produce conviction, and is set aside in favor of their own fancies and predilections. All this only shows how prejudice can blind and distort the mental vision, and how inconsistent men are, when a favorite opinion or theory of practice is to be established.

We long for the time when Christians shall earnestly inquire

for the *old paths*, that they may *walk* therein; when *with one accord* they shall exclaim:

"Let names and sects and parties fall,
And Jesus Christ be all in all;"

when, as in Apostolic days, there shall be "One Lord, one faith, one baptism;" when with "*one mind and one mouth*" all shall pray to God, as was done in that "upper room" in Jerusalem, where the infant Church engaged "with one accord in prayer and supplication." And now may the God of peace, through the all-prevailing intercession of our Mediator and Redeemer, vouchsafe to give unto His people everywhere unprejudiced minds, meek hearts, and devout affections, that in the public services of the sanctuary they may soon become as united in their prayers as they are in their praises—as symphonious and responsive as when they eternally join in adoration hereafter, and with ten thousand times ten thousand voices, like the noise of many waters, fill the courts of heaven with the song that is always new.

ART. VIII.—AUTHORITY AND FREEDOM MEETING IN FAITH.

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Government, wherever you find it, is not from *man*, but from *God*—not from *beneath*, but from *above*, and always involves *divine*, and not human, authority. On this account the penalty which government inflicts through any one of its legitimate functionaries, is to be looked upon as a *divine* and not as a human chastisement. Whether, therefore, government come to us from abroad, or arise from within our own being, it is equally *from God*, and *therefore*, must be obeyed.

The object in this brief article, is to indicate the difference in the way of *Freedom*, as arising from our relation to government as now indicated—that is, to government as a power *outside* of us, and to government as a power *within* us.

In the first case, we have government as a commanding power speaking to man, forbidding this, and enjoining that. It has no respect to his feelings, his tastes or his inclinations. It simply *commands*, and the individual *must* obey.

Now it is clear, that all *such* obedience must, in the nature of the case, be more or less *unfree* and *slavish*, because the obedience may not result from an inward willingness or desire to obey. Indeed the outward command, it will be found most generally, if not always, regarding man purely in his natural state, is directly *against* the inward feeling to respond to it in the way of obedience. The command looks in one direction, while the individual will looks in another; and if the man obey at all, he does it because he *must*, or because he feels that he must, and not because it is his pleasure. As long as the government is purely external, there is no proper harmony between its authority on the one hand, and the spirit of man, on the other, which is expected and required to obey it.

On this account it is that the freest government in the world, whether in Church or State, must be more or less unfree and tyrannical. In this form it is always authority speaking to man, *demanding* obedience, while man does not find within him a disposition freely responding to it, but responding because it is a *command* and *must be obeyed*. This is the reason why, strictly speaking, there is no *free* government in the world. Approximations to this idea are all that we find, in fact. The free *disposition* to obedience is not *in* man, and hence, if obedience is to be secured at all, it must be *constrained* from without, which involves bondage for the spirit. Men, therefore, related thus externally to government, it matters not what kind or form it may be, are and must be always more or less unfree and slavish.

Here lies the conflict between the inward demand of freedom and outward or objective authority; and history shows that no wisdom of the Philosophers, or ingenuity of Statesmen has ever been able so to reconcile the two as to induce the sense of full liberty in the bosom of perfect obedience. Manifestly the difficulty lies not in government, or in the authority which

it represents, but in its subjects who are required practically to obey it.

Liberty is not secured by the destruction of objective authority; nor is it secured by educating the demand of freedom out of the spirit of man. This demand is inherent in man, and to remove it, by any means, is itself to degrade him to slavery; and on the other hand, to destroy outward authority, is to destroy all government, the first result of which would be anarchy, and the second bondage. It is not by the *destruction* of either of these constituent and necessary elements of man's life that liberty is attained; for in so doing, you will, and in both cases alike, reach at last the same end—*slavery*. A new force is required. Liberty lies in the *reconciliation*, not the destruction, of these two things. How this may be done is the great problem.

Now this problem, we say, can be solved only by the principle of faith. Faith does not deny government, but gives it an *internal* existence. It recognizes the same divine authority—"Seeing Him who is invisible." But in this case, the authority does not remain *outside* of the man, as something foreign to his will, commanding *this*, and prohibiting *that*. By faith this authority is introduced *into his inner being*, incorporated with the reason and conscience, and *identified* as it were with the substance of the will itself, making all his activities to arise in it, and go out from it. Thus, this authority becomes an essential part of man's own inward nature; it coalesces with his freedom; it is properly his own will; it speaks from his deepest consciousness; briefly, it is man himself, ruling himself in the fear of God.

Now this authority being thus *put into* man, and made identical with the law of his will, the conflict which ordinarily exists between it and the sense of freedom, is at once destroyed. This is the breaking down of the "partition-wall," by the atonement, (*at-one-ment*) of Christ, the substance of which faith involves as its contents. In the bosom of this divine grace, these two things are melted together; they flow into one and the same thing. It is freedom in law, or the will acting freely from its

own authority. This is the origin of *Peace*, involving the proper harmony of man's nature, and consequently the ground of true liberty. Divine grace, thus received by Faith, creates the internal disposition of obedience to authority; and in this disposition is involved the whole force or power practically of moral government. It changes the thoughts, desires and purposes of the mind, and unites them with the principle of right and law which these already comprehend as a necessary part of their being. Government is the same, but the subject is different. From this *new nature*, which starts from the principle of grace received by Faith, the man moves as naturally and freely in the *right* direction, as before this, from the life of his fallen and depraved nature, he moved in the *wrong* direction. He needs no force from abroad. This force which before was external, is now internal—which before was not part of him and simply spoke *to* him, is now identical with the deepest springs of his being, and speaks *from* the secret chambers of his own heart. "His *delight*, now, is in the *law* of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night."

Here Liberty and Authority are united in man very much as they are in God, and the problem is theoretically solved. Practically, however, man's ignorance, weakness and perverseness, will, of course, interrupt the actual harmony of these factors to some extent. The farther man advances in sanctification, the more perfect does his liberty become, simply because it brings him more and more into harmony with right law and the principle of objective authority. Sanctification has for its ultimate end the *perfect* blending of freedom and authority; and when this point shall be fully reached, liberty also shall be perfect and complete.

This is the government of *Faith*, which involves the only real Freedom known in the world. Hence our Lord said: "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free *indeed*." He is free in his obedience to law, because this law which he obeys is the central law of his own being. His obedience is made *necessary* not by anything outward, but by his freedom itself—it is the necessary outward expression of his soul liberated

from the law of sin, which is the law of rebellion against legitimate authority. His obedience is, therefore, not constrained or forced, but natural, spontaneous and joyous—it is the inward free *necessity* of his being.

This shows, now, still farther, that *liberty* and *necessity* are not *antagonizing* forces, but meet at last, and become the same thing. They are always one. In God this union is perfect; man is morally like God in proportion as he realizes the free union of the same forces in his moral constitution, resulting in *liberty*. The only possibility of realizing this is found in the atonement of Christ, which shows the deep and vital relation of Christianity to human society, if this can ever hope to realize the demand of its own being.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

CHURCH DOCTRINE, BIBLE TRUTH. By the Rev. M. F. Sadler, A. M., &c. London: Bell & Daldy, 186 Fleet street. Cambridge: Deighton, Bell & Co. 1866.

This little book of 360 pages, from the book-store of J. B. Weldin & Co., 101 Wood street, Pittsburgh, Pa., has fallen into our hands, and deserves a notice in these pages. The author is known to some in the Church, from his little work on "The Second Adam and The New Birth," a review of which appears in the present number of this REVIEW. He has also published a larger work recently, entitled "Emmanuel," excellent also in its way, but not so satisfactory on the subject of the atonement as we expected. Not, that it is not strictly orthodox as to the *objective* character of the atonement, over against what may be called a merely *subjective* atonement, but because he does not attempt to give us the true reconciliation of these two sides, which, we think, the theological world is struggling after. Bushnell argues the problem with much earnestness, but falls short of a solution, taking his position in the view of the atonement being only subjective—only for man, and not also for God. The little work before us seems to be fully up to the author's other works. It treats the subject of the Church and Church Ordinances in the light of the Scripture. It is sometimes supposed, that churchly views must rest entirely upon tradition, while what is called *Evangelical Christianity* has the Bible all its own way. No greater mistake, however, could well be made than

this. It is always a begging the question when it is asserted, and isolated passages quoted to prove, that the modern Puritanic view of the Gospel is the Scriptural one. It makes all the difference in the world with what preconceived notions, or opinions, or faith we come to the study of the Scriptures. One may find (or think he finds) in the Epistles the modern metaphysical theory of election, according to Calvinism, while another reads there an altogether different scheme of election.

This little volume starts out by showing first what the *Gospel* is, viz.: *A setting forth of certain facts in the history of Jesus Christ*. Then he shows how effectually and scripturally the Gospel is set forth in the Church services for the Church year. The nature of the Church, the sacraments, ordinances, ministry, are then treated in the same way, that is, in the light of Scripture. All who read this book will be surprised to find how much the Scripture supports what may be regarded as the churchly over against the unchurchly system of faith and worship. Of course there are things in it in regard to the nature of the ministry which we cannot adopt; but we are taught that all things are ours, and whether the truth comes from Lutheran, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Roman Catholic, we all have a common inheritance in it. *It is ours.* A.

A CRITICAL AND EXEGETICAL COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF EXODUS, WITH A NEW TRANSLATION. By James G. Murphy, D. D., T. C. D., *Professor of Hebrew, Belfast*. Andover: Warren F. Draper. Boston: W. H. Halliday & Co., Nos. 58 and 60, Cornhill. Philadelphia: Smith, English & Co. 1868.

"The present volume on Exodus," says the author, in his preface, "is a second contribution" (the first was a commentary on Genesis) "to the exposition of the Old Testament, and to the practical demonstration, that a just interpretation of the volume of inspiration will obviate supposed difficulties, which have arisen mainly from misapprehension, and bring out more strikingly and uniformly its essential harmony with science, reason, and history. It removes, in the author's apprehension, any impossibilities that may have seemed to lie in the natural events that are recorded in the narrative."

"The method of exposition pursued in this volume, as well as in that of Genesis, is the following: First, the general arrangement and division of topics in the book are brought under notice. Next, at the head of each section, a few prominent words are quoted and briefly expounded, for the sake of readers acquainted with the Hebrew, who are supposed to peruse the section in the original. Then follows a translation of the section, which is designed to be a mere revision of the Authorized version. This the reader will compare with the original, or with the corresponding portion of his English Bible. The Commentary then appended is designed to explain the momentous import of the historical facts recorded, to mark their bearing on the

highest interests of man, and to unfold the great principles of ethical and theological truth which are stated for his guidance and comfort."

The work comprises a volume of 385 pages, published in the very best style. The first books of the Bible have become a subject of new interest in England, Ireland and Scotland, as well as elsewhere, by reason of the attack made upon their inspiration and credibility by Bishop Colenso.

The efforts to prove that science and revelation contradict each other have already proved to be a failure in reference to the divine record of creation. The more the subject is investigated, the more doubtless will it be found, that the researches of science only corroborate the whole record of the Pentateuch.

We always notice a striking difference, however, between English and German commentators. The former are mostly inclined to treat the inspired writings with a common-sense view of things, while the latter seem to bring to the work a deeper sense of the supernatural in revelation. This comes out in the author's treatment of the wonder-works of the magicians in Egypt. These present no real wonder to him; for they are explained on the common-sense theory, that the work of the magicians was merely a feat of legerdemain. The fact of a super-human evil world over against the supernatural in the Kingdom of God is not touched upon. This is only one instance in which the manner of treatment is shown. The Bible cannot be interpreted in its depths without a sense of the supernatural therein revealed. It is a mystery in language, as revelation itself is a mystery in fact.

Still the work is worthy of being commended as a useful volume, both for ministers and laymen. As a family commentary it will certainly serve a useful purpose. For professional study, it is not as rich and deep as others that might be named. The author has, however, faithfully carried out the promises of his preface. The New Translation is, doubtless, worthy the labor the author gave to it. A.

GOODRICH'S PICTORAL HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES. Enlarged Edition. Philadelphia: E. H. Butler & Co. 1868. Pp. 516.

The merits of this educational work appear sufficiently in the fact that nearly 500,000 copies of it have been sold since its first publication about fifteen years ago. Though the design of the author was to make it originally a book for schools, it is believed, that as now presented, it will prove to be a convenient and useful manual for the family and the general reader. The author brings down the history of events in the United States to the Administration of President Johnson. The book is neatly printed on good white paper; 12mo., muslin; red edges. The illustrations are numerous and well-executed. K.

MITCHELL'S NEW SCHOOL GEOGRAPHY. Published by E. H. Butler & Co., Philadelphia.

S. Augustus Mitchell has devoted his life to the study and elucidation of the Science of Geography. This is the fourth book of a

series of works in this department of learning. In it Prof. Mitchell furnishes us with a larger amount of information than we have met with in any similar work of the same size. His clear method and exact statement of the numerous and varied facts, which require mention in a work of this character, make it easy for the teacher to teach and for the pupil to learn and fix them in his memory. The book is already well known throughout this land, and deserves a place in the course of study of every school in the Union.

Accompanying this volume is an Atlas having forty-four copper-plate maps. It is no undue praise to say, that the care bestowed upon the literary, artistic and mechanical department of this Geography and Atlas make them in every way worthy of the advanced state of geographical knowledge and of popular education. The statistical tables and the pronouncing vocabulary of nearly 10,000 geographical words, appended to the Atlas, form a valuable feature of the series.

K.

MITCHELL'S NEW INTERMEDIATE GEOGRAPHY. By the same Publishers, is the third book of the author's series.

This is an entirely new work, and in its plan and general scope will be found well adapted to schools of every grade. After a definition of the terms used in Geography, the following order obtains. First comes the *map*; then, opposite, the *questions on the map*; and then, the *descriptive geography* of the countries which are on that map; with marginal questions on the descriptive matter. The position and extent of countries, their natural features, products, population, chief towns, government and religion, receive each proper attention at the hands of the author. The embellishments—numerous and well executed—are all that can be desired in a work of this kind. The works of Professor Mitchell *deserve* to be popular; and we are not at all surprised to find that they are used in whole or in part in thirty-five States of the Union. The Publishers have done their work well, and these truly useful books appear in letter-press that is refreshing to the eye.

K.

THE AMERICAN CHILD'S PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES. By Samuel G. Goodrich. Philadelphia: E. H. Butler & Co.

This book is designed to meet a demand which has long existed in our schools and in families. It is intended to serve as an introduction to the "Pictorial History" by the same author above noticed. It is a pleasure to examine the works of this famous author, who was so familiar to our childhood under the name of "Peter Parley." But he writes no more! This interesting book, written for children, is his last work! He knows right well how to talk to the little ones; and thousands of them will rejoice over this last production of an author, who thirty years ago taught and interested their parents by "Peter Parley's Tales." It is illustrated by sixty engravings. Neatly printed on clear white paper.

K.